The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. XLIII NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 1925 NUMBER 551

Contents

The Week 108

Editorials

The Source of Federal Paternalism..... 112
School, Church and State 114

General Articles

Rules and Men.....George Soule 117
After Pain (verse).....Marjorie Meeker 119
The Public and the Geneva Minimum.....Norman Angell 120
Rebuke (verse).....George O'Neil 121
On the Wrong Side of the Sword..Virginia Woolf 122
Washington Notes.....T. R. B. 124
Houdini.....Edmund Wilson 125
"Rejoice Not, O Philistia, All of Thee . . ." (verse).....Babette Deutsch 126
"When We Have Heard That Time Is Only Seeming".....Maxwell Anderson 126
The Living Christ.....Gilbert Seldes 127

Correspondence 128

Reviews of Books

Brigham Young.....Robert Littell 129
No Spirit at All.....Waldo Frank 131
Around the Mulberry Bush.....Lewis Mumford 132
Letters on the American Revolution.....James Truslow Adams 133

The Week

WHAT is the United States government trying to bring about in Mexico? In one of the most extraordinary documents in our diplomatic history, Secretary Kellogg has issued a blanket warning, belligerent in tone, to the Calles government that American rights must be respected and American lives safeguarded. If the conduct of the Mexican government is not satisfactory to us in this and all other respects, Mr. Kellogg says in effect, we shall withdraw recognition. Moreover, the United States hears that another revolution is impending. If Mexico wants us to aid in suppressing this one as we did the last, the behavior of the Calles government must follow our wishes. Both the tone and the substance of this outgiving are of an almost unprecedented character. They are the more remarkable because, so far as American public opinion is concerned, they come from a clear sky. No intimation has reached us that affairs in Mexico were going with the desperate badness which would alone justify such a peremptory attitude. We are left to suppose that the State Department is in possession of information not possessed by Mexican correspondents of American newspapers and American citizens resident in Mexico. By acting on this secret information—secret if it exists—so abruptly and drastically, and in a manner so certain to provoke only one sort of response from the Calles government, the State Department comes dangerously near to usurping in fact if not in name the privileges of the Congress.

MR. KELLOGG ignores, as President Calles has promptly pointed out, the fact that two Mixed Claims Commissions composed of Mexicans and Americans are now sitting, Commissions expressly created after long negotiations between Mr. Hughes and former President Obregon, for the purpose of passing on the claims of American citizens for compensation. Is the United States government dissatisfied with the actions of these Commissions? And if so, in what way? Do we demand for Americans in Mexico a special status which is not open to the nationals of other countries? Are we now dissatisfied with the basis of indemnification for property taken under the agrarian or mining clauses of the new Mexican Constitution, though that basis was acceptable to President Harding and Secretary Hughes? These are questions of the greatest importance, on which our State Department sheds no light whatever. Finally, what is the meaning of the ambiguous phrases about an impending revolution? They will certainly be read south of the Rio Grande as a covert invitation to some group now out of power to make better promises to the United States than the Calles government will make, and then go in and win, with our connivance.

WHATEVER may be the facts of the immediate situation which has prompted Mr. Kellogg's extraordinary procedure, the general situation remains just what it has been. Mexico has adopted a new Constitution which reserves to the government the ownership of natural resources, including oil; and has introduced a policy of parcelling out large estates to be worked by the peasants now resident upon them. Despite the fair words about "indem-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nification" it is feared that these policies will amount to partial or complete confiscation of the property of American investors, and this our government insists shall not take place. Though we have ourselves repeatedly recognized the principle of confiscation of property without indemnity—notably when we freed the slaves, and abolished the liquor industry—we insist that Americans in Mexico shall not be subject to Mexican law, but by a species of extra-territoriality, to American law. The whole history of our recent policy toward Mexico is an example of the application of this principle, which is now applied by Messrs. Kellogg and Coolidge so roughly, and with such seeming gratuitousness, as to create overnight a severe strain on the friendly relation between the two countries. The New Republic believes that the doctrine is wrong in principle and inexpedient in practice; and that the citizens of this country have a right to be heard before our national honor is pledged, up to the hilt, in enforcement of it.

RECENT reports from the meeting of the Council of the League of Nations at Geneva have declared that a momentous decision was reached on that occasion. The French and the British governments, in the persons of Messrs. Briand and Chamberlain, have agreed upon a security compact which will both protect France from a future attack by Germany and Germany from a future attack by France. Doubtless the reports have some truth. Messrs. Briand and Chamberlain have whittled down the differences which have divided them in the past until an agreement is in sight. Nevertheless it would be premature to discuss at present the alleged terms of that agreement. We have no trustworthy information as yet about its scope. Nor are we sure that further negotiations may not somewhat diminish the present official optimism. It will be well to reserve judgment until some of the documents are communicated to the public. Their publication cannot be long delayed now. In the course of the next few weeks it will be necessary to sign or not to sign compacts which will determine the questions of peace and war for the Europe of the future. The date of the promised evacuation of the Ruhr is the deadline for all efforts to reach peace by negotiation.

THE situation in China is unquestionably of the gravest character, and one which is likely to grow worse before it is better. The fighting around Canton between two local factions is like the other "wars" of recent years, and has little significance for the outside world; but the anti-foreign sentiment, and particularly the anti-English feeling, is still growing, and no one can say where it will end. In the past, the Chinese have never exhibited sufficient national solidarity to make concerted action against the foreigner possible except temporarily under the influence of such emotion as was present during the Boxer uprising. Changing conditions have today apparently created more genuine national spirit than ever before. The general and well-justified feeling of resentment over the whole policy of most of the Western powers since 1840 is accentuated by such grievances as the extra-territoriality enjoyed by factory owners in the treaty ports, the social discrimination against all Chinese in the European settlements, and the ready appeal to firearms in the case of any sort of local disturbance of an anti-foreign character.

ON THIS last point, the testimony of a group of members of the faculty of the Peking National University as to the recent Shanghai incident is interesting. We quote from their signed statement, cabled to the New York World:

> Strikes of Chinese workers, demanding increase of wages, had been going on for some time in the Japanese cotton factories at Tsingtao and Shanghai, and a striker was shot and killed by the Japanese without any justifiable cause. Against this brutal act some Chinese students who were merely young boys and girls paraded as a manifestation of protest in the streets of Shanghai on May 30 last. They were armed with nothing more than pamphlets and handbills.
>
> The police of the international settlement, which are practically under the complete control of British officials and consuls, not only saw fit to prohibit the demonstration but also arrested a number of the students taking part in it. Then the rest of the students went to the police station demanding the release of their fellow students. The police ordered them to disperse. As they refused to go, a British police Inspector ordered "Shoot to kill." Six of the boys were killed on the spot and over forty were seriously wounded. The firing continued . . . for at least six days. . . . Most reports show at least seventy were killed and 300 wounded.

This is of course an ex parte statement, and cannot be accepted as completely authentic until verified from impartial sources. But since it is the version which is undoubtedly believed by the Chinese, it helps one to understand the feeling in the country today. Think of it in American terms: suppose Germany, some years ago, had seized and held all of New York City below Fourteenth Street. Suppose Americans working in the financial district for German employers could not claim the protection of American courts, but were ruled by special German tribunals. Suppose an American on strike had been shot, and a group of American students, parading in protest, were fired on by the special German police, and six were killed. What would Americans do?

THE recent speech of Senator Underwood of Alabama, in which he out-Mellons Secretary Mellon and proposes to do away almost entirely with the supertaxes on incomes provides an interesting illustration of the divided counsels which pervade the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Democratic party. There is one group of Democratic leaders which believes that the party must in the future become definitely and increasingly progressive, and by its progressivism offer to the American people an alternative to Republican conservatism. There is another which believes that the American people are essentially conservative for the present and that the only way to regain popular favor is to become more conservative and more plutocratic than the Republicans. Senator Underwood is the spokesman for this group, and in his recent speech he certainly speaks with no uncertain voice. According to his hearing "the very fabric of our institutions cries out against" the supertaxes. His sincerity in associating the American idea with plutocracy is unquestionable, and he undoubtedly speaks for a large part of his party. That is one reason why it is ridiculous to expect the Democrats to become the sincere advocates of an anti-plutocratic progressivism.

THE decision of the Supreme Court in the Gitlow case is one of the greatest importance, on which we shall comment at length in a later issue. In the meantime it may be said that while the decision is disappointing, it is not wholly so. Gitlow, it will be remembered, was convicted under the New York State Criminal Anarchy law, passed not long after the assassination of President McKinley. This law, which had been a dead letter for nearly twenty years, made it illegal to advocate the "overthrow of organized government" by force or violence or the assassination of officials, or any unlawful means. Gitlow was not an anarchist in any sense in which the word was understandable in 1902. He was a communist sympathetic to Russian ideas, who believed in the substitution of government by a proletarian dictatorship for existing government, this change to be brought about by the "mass strike." Incidentally, he was not charged with advocating assassination, and this question did not enter the case. The attorneys for the defense, in arguing the case before the Supreme Court, sought to draw a distinction between the advocacy of violence in the abstract, and specific incitement to definite violent action. This issue the majority decision of the Court evaded by deciding that Gitlow was in fact guilty of specific incitement. At the same time, the terms of the decision do—and for the first time in the history of the Court—assume that the "due process" clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution is a restraint on interference by the individual states with freedom of speech and of the press.

IN A previous decision, as Justice Holmes points out in dissenting from the present majority view, the Supreme Court had held that the test of any case like that of Gitlow is whether "the words used are used in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that [the state] has a right to prevent." In other words, it makes a difference whether you shout "Fire!" in a crowded theatre or an empty one. This attitude the majority of the Court has now abandoned, holding that the words are unlawful in and of themselves. It is probably needless to say that the editors of this paper prefer the social policy suggested in the words of Justice Holmes to that outlined by the majority of the Court. With no more liking than has that majority for the doctrines Mr. Gitlow expressed, and fully conceding the right of government to prohibit the specific advocacy of violence directed against itself, we believe that from every point of view it is better that the doctrinaire revolutionist should be permitted to advocate his particular variety of Utopia openly, than that he should be driven underground.

YOUNG Mr. Scopes has gone back to Tennessee after being dined and fêted in New York within an inch of his life. America has never been able to distinguish between those who are heroes by accident of circumstances and the men who achieve preeminence by their own powers; our usual custom is to look at individuals of the former type and observe petulantly that they seem like very ordinary folk after all. Mr. Scopes, in the presence of his fifty-thousand-dollar movie offer and his hundred thousand dollars' worth of offers to lecture and write, behaved with sensible modesty, realizing quite well that the searchlight which has suddenly been turned upon him is due to circumstances and not to any personal quality. The trial in which he happens to be the central figure has caught the imagination of the country, which properly sees it as testing an important principle of free education, as well as providing a picturesque battlefield for a long-overdue struggle between scientific truth and that type of fundamentalist literalism which amounts to superstition. But the trial would have been just as interesting with any other defendant, and just as important with—if it were possible—none at all.

THE attorneys for the defence are reported to be of two minds whether they should deliberately seek to lose their case. If lost, it can be carried through on appeal until the U. S. Supreme Court has ruled on the validity of the Tennessee law. On the other hand, they feel that if by their eloquence they could secure a favorable verdict at once, the effect on the country would be far stronger, and the law would then become inoperative by nullification. We fear the estimable lawyers who have raised this point are allowing their imaginations to be seduced by the prospects of a dramatic success before the eyes of the whole nation. The question, after all, is not whether Mr. Darrow is a better orator than Mr. Bryan; the question is whether the State of Tennessee has the right to pass a law forbidding teachers in state-supported schools to acquaint their pupils with the fact that a certain scientific theory ex-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ists, a theory which now owns the adherence of all intelligent people everywhere. After all, the theory of evolution can take care of itself; its development will hardly be changed a hair's breadth by the action of Tennessee or any other state. But freedom of speech and thought are human rights which are frequently in peril from the bigoted and the tyrannical. It is these which are endangered by the Tennessee law; and while we should be glad to see the citizens of that commonwealth repudiate the late action of their legislators, such a development seems so unlikely that common sense suggests the desirability of obtaining, as promptly as possible, a decision of the U. S. Supreme Court as to whether the law is constitutional.

CLINTON W. GILBERT, writing in the New York Evening Post, reports the most interesting and encouraging aspect of the Scopes trial. He quotes a Washington newspaper man who has just returned after an extensive trip through the South and says that everywhere there is a feverish interest in the subject of evolution. People are talking about it to the exclusion of nearly everything else; bookstores report a run on volumes dealing with the theme. Anyone who occupies an important public position can become famous overnight by taking his stand formally under the banner of the Darwinians. In short, the country is seething with excitement over the merits of an important but complicated and difficult scientific theory about which most people's ideas are certainly vague and probably incorrect. The Tennessee legislature may yet prove an important friend of the human race. By seeking to make the theory of evolution illegal it has made it exciting; the people will imbibe more bootleg knowledge in a month than they would absorb under usual circumstances in a decade.

PRESIDENT COOLIDGE has fulfilled everyone's expectations, and rejected the report of a majority of the Tariff Commission recommending that the tariff on sugar be reduced by about half a cent a pound. That he would take this action has long been certain; the only wonder is that it has been so long delayed. During the months that the report has been before him, the personnel of the Tariff Commission has been altered to prevent a repetition of the embarrassing situation where an official recommendation that a duty be reduced is presented to the All-Highest among the lords of high tariff. The President's ground is that during the time since the Tariff Commission started investigating two years ago, the wholesale price of granulated sugar has dropped from 8.40 cents a pound to 5.48; that we have a large beet sugar industry in this country which might be endangered if the tariff were reduced; that anyhow, we ought to raise more sugar beets and less wheat; that the Treasury needs the $135,000,000 it gets from the import duties; that in case of war, we ought to be self-sustaining as to food stuffs; and that Cuban sugar may get into the hands of a trust or trusts which will bleed the American consumer if the domestic product is not available to hold the price down. This is all pretty plausible, if you believe on principle that it is wise to rob Peter Consumer to pay Paul Producer. It is plausible, that is, with two important exceptions. The President neglects to show anywhere that the beet sugar industry needs the amount of protection it is getting. In effect he says: "Don't mind if the nice kind lion bites off your thumb. Think how much worse it would be if he bit off your whole hand." He also fails to explain what is the use of a Tariff Commission created to give an expert opinion, based on scientific investigation, if the recommendations of that Commission are to be disregarded and final judgment based on a temporary condition of the sugar market. We agree with Mr. Basil Manly that the President has made the "flexible" provision of the Fordney-McCumber Tariff Law too ridiculous for anyone to pretend to take it seriously any longer.

PROBABLY the most aggressive recent act of lawlessness parading in the guise of law was the restraining order issued by Judge Wilkerson against the Railway Shop Crafts Strike of 1922. It outraged the most settled traditions of American constitutional policy; it still more offended public decency in that Judge Wilkerson, himself an appointee of Daugherty (for Daugherty designated the men for Harding's selection) subserviently signed on the dotted line indicated by Daugherty. Despite this contribution to lawlessness on the part of Judge Wilkerson, the American Law Institute at its recent meeting in Washington saw fit to select Judge Wilkerson as one of its speakers, and Judge Wilkerson had the hardihood—forgetful of his own disservice to law and order—to summon the bar to its duties. "We live by symbols"; and it is simply beyond comprehension how the American Law Institute, in whose leadership are enlisted some of the most high-minded members of the legal profession, expects to educate the laity to the true significance of law and legal processes if it chooses to select for public honor men like Judge Wilkerson. The Supreme Court has just expressed its opinion of Judge Wilkerson's understanding of American legal institutions and of the proper scope of his authority. Unfortunately the Wilkerson injunction never reached the Supreme Court. But a minor order of Judge Wilkerson in which he summoned Chief Robertson of the Railroad Brotherhood from Cleveland to appear before him in Chicago, has now been reversed by the unanimous decision of the Supreme Court, because Judge Wilkerson, by a violent construction of law, sought to extend his jurisdiction beyond the limits of his judicial district and in so doing departed from a general rule affecting the federal courts since 1789.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Source of Federal Paternalism

SINCE President Coolidge delivered his Memorial Day address on local self-government, its responsibilities and failures, the New Republic has received a number of interesting comments on different aspects of the speech, two of which are published in another column. Some of these letters expressed surprise that the official spokesman of the Republican party, which like its predecessors the Federalists and Whigs, was formed to vindicate national as the necessary supplement to local self-government, should have seemed so blind to the historic attitude of this party. These observers have exaggerated the President's departure from tradition. The Republican party does not at present embody a conception of American nationalism which welcomes the assumption of new collective responsibilities and which seeks administrative agencies with which to redeem them. Under Mr. Coolidge's leadership it is dedicated to the belief that the American government exists fundamentally to promote the public welfare by preserving existing institutions and by protecting or encouraging individual citizens in the prosecution of private business enterprises. But its conception of the essential political purpose, whose realization is supposed to unify American national life, remains a conception which is bound to magnify the authority of the fedaral government and diminish that of the states.

Mr. Coolidge's Memorial Day address was ostensibly a tribute to the value of local self-government and a warning against the consequences of a neglect of its responsibilities. He accused the states quite justifiably of grave defaults in the conduct of such essential functions as the administration of criminal justice, and he threatened them, if they refuse to reform, with the transfer of many of their existing responsibilities to the federal government. Democratic critics straightway pointed out the weakness of his contention. If he were a sincere believer in local self-government, both the warning and the threat were inconsiderate. Local governments are intended to represent local interests, standards and opinions, and local communities are justified in operating their governments to suit themselves and in ignoring the different interests and standards of other parts of the country. According to any consistent theory of democratic self-government, they should be free to make as many mistakes as they pleased. The federal authority cannot take over any of their functions without undermining their vitality.

Both the President's contention and the retort to it seem to the New Republic to lack reality. It was unreal for Mr. Coolidge to warn the states that if they did not improve their behavior, the United States would be forced to take over some of their functions. Assuming that the states are as recreant as Mr. Coolidge accuses them of being, their peculiarly flagrant default must be caused by some deep disturbance in the health of American democracy which will result in the general ineptitude and lack of balance of the federal no less than of the state governments. But it is not less unreal to expect, as Mr. Coolidge's critics apparently do, to vindicate the authority and the vitality of the state governments by emancipating their conductors from any sense of obligation for the national welfare. The state and the federal governments are mutually dependent parts of the political machinery which the American democracy must use in order to provide for its economic and social needs. The vitality of the states as organs of local government is associated with the vitality of the United States as the organ of a centralized government. The federal government cannot wax strong and serviceable by absorbing the authority of the states, but neither can the state governments expect to vindicate their autonomy by refusing in their behavior to recognize that they form part of a larger political whole. The American democracy is not the embodiment of any fundamentalist political dogma. It is a nation in transit from a loose to a more coherent federation. Its local and national governmental organs are instruments adopted for the purpose of enabling the different classes, sections, interests and activities to find sufficient opportunity for expression.

Unprofitable discussions of this kind over the distribution of powers between the state and federal governments are the reflection of a faltering and confused conception of the meaning and impulse which give form to American national development. The existing confusion and difference of opinion are the results of one of the most complete shifts in the centre of economic gravity which ever occurred in the history of any people. During the past twenty years the American nation has suffered the exhaustion of a treasure upon which up to that time it has subsisted, and the loss has for the moment compelled it to continue its journey without any sufficient common understanding as to its destination. Until recently the existence of a vast and apparently inexhaustible reserve of land and natural resources which was the common inheritance of the whole people, and whose settlement, development and appropriation was their major collective enterprise—the existence of this domain, and the opportunity of widely distributed individual economic independence and a high standard of social welfare which it offered, determined even more than its system of law and government the meaning of America for Americans. But soon after the beginning of the twentieth century they reached the end of this great fund of unappropriated and unrealized natural resources, and since then they have drifted along, conscious of having suffered a great loss but incapable of supplying either a material or an imaginative substitute.

Differing interests and ideas about the distribution and the political future of this national domain have always occupied the foreground of American polit-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ical controversy. The Jacksonian Democrats represented the pioneers who were occupied chiefly with agricultural expansion and who were suspicious of the unmanageable and remote federal government. Federal policy was necessarily the reflection of national public opinion. The pioneers opposed any enlargement of its scope because they resented the obligation to consult the divergent interests of commercial and industrial sections. Their conception of a local self-governing democracy, as something which was necessarily suspicious and hostile to national obligations and responsibilities, was exposed and killed off by the intrusion of the slavery issue into national politics. The existence of public lands, whose future status involved an inevitable national responsibility, forced the American people to choose between slavery and freedom. The attempt which the South finally made to plant slave communities on the whole public domain, and in this way to convert the American nation into a commonwealth dominated by slavery, brought on the Civil War. The complacency with which the western and northern Democrats consented to the domination of the American nation by slavery, provided the responsibility for so doing could be passed on to local democracies, compelled the formation of the Republican party. Republicanism was in the beginning an organized protest against the idea that in respect to slavery national irresponsibility was a necessary implication of the vitality of local democratic government. The crisis which brought the party into existence soon passed, but the party survived as the instrument also of a national economic policy. It developed into the first coalition in American political history between the economic and local groups which were interested, on the one hand, in the rapid exploitation of the public domain, and, on the other, in the rapid expansion of American industry.

When, early in the nineteenth century, the arable land and the most accessible and valuable natural resources were appropriated, the effect of the loss on American political controversies was almost immediate. Within a few years Theodore Roosevelt sought strenuously to modify the traditional policy so as to adapt it to the comparative scarcity which would prevail thereafter. He proposed the expert conservation of what remained of the fund in place of the former free and easy distribution, and he preached conservation as an essential national responsibility which was to be carried out by federal administrative agencies. A little later, under the pressure of Republican opposition, he projected a new national progressive party which sought by increasing popular political power and improving popular education to render practicable a collectivist Hamiltonian democracy—a democracy, that is, with a lively sense of national responsibility for the individual and social welfare, and with an equipment of appropriate political agencies to carry out its program.

The project was, of course, a complete failure. The Republican party would have nothing to do with his proposed Hamiltonian democracy. It preferred to represent those classes which have profited most by the actual development of the public domain. The American nation, according to the present Republican theory, does not need to bother about the concentration of economic power in the hands of a small class or the scarcity values with which the private appropriation of the natural resources has inflicted the economic system. It is just as much the business of the federal government to encourage private business enterprise and to protect its fruits as it was in the days when by dividing the public domain it possessed the means to distribute economic power and independence among the people.

The Republicans, that is, are perpetuating in the interests of organized capital and big business a national policy which derived its social desirability from its association with the distribution of the public domain, and which was intended to build up a territorial agrarian democracy. The policy was and is supposed to cultivate individual independence and initiative, but its individualism was always mixed with a large supply of collectivism. At bottom its logic and tendency were necessarily and profoundly paternalistic. It encouraged the American people to look upon the national government as the source of individual opportunity, the dispenser of favors and bounties, the advance agent of the prosperity of the American people, and, finally the custodian and guardian of popular and property rights. This was all very well when the beneficent government was promoting the interests and protecting the rights of the great mass of the people, but it will serve less well when the bounties, the prosperity and the protection are bestowed chiefly upon business men and city residents, and when the discrimination in favor of urban industry is driving the independent farmer who is the supposed backbone of the American democracy away from the land. So long as the prosperity continues, the system will be justified by its fruits, but the prosperity cannot long survive the mad waste of natural resources which is now taking place, and, in any event, the essential paternalism and collectivism of the system will steadily increase and become more apparent. The Republicans will in the end be obliged, as Mr. Roosevelt suggested, either to follow after pre-war Germany and post-war England and experiment with a policy of social benevolence, or else they will have to override class and sectional opposition to their rule by converting the mild American government of the past into a dictatorial, peremptory and ruthless guardian of the prevailing law and order.

There is a small but influential and intelligent group of progressives who see more clearly than do many Republicans the essential paternalism of the Republican system, and would like to block its progress. They propose to do so by declaring war on all projected increases of federal authority and by reviving the earlier Democratic conception of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

state as a political organ whose healthy operation implies federal irresponsibility and non-interference. We do not believe that such a method of reënforcing local self-government is practicable or desirable. In one form or another the exercise of federal authority is bound to increase. It is bound to increase precisely because the difficulties and responsibilities of government in the United States will become greater as the country becomes more mature and the momentum of its early growth dies down. These difficulties and responsibilities are part of the life of the whole American nation, and if they are too onerous and complicated to be wisely handled by national authority and according to national needs and standards, the failure to deal adequately with them will wreck the American ship of state.

The responsibilities to which we refer are born of the enormous difficulty of socializing the institution of private property in a modern industrial community. In such a community the ownership of certain business organizations vests in a few people prodigious and in part irresponsible power over the lives of their fellow countrymen. The existing distribution of functions between the federal and the state governments is equivalent to a paralysis of the political authority upon which the American nation must in part depend in order to prevent individual and class interests from excessive aggrandizement at the expense of other classes and the national welfare. The Constitution originally vested in one branch of the federal government the function of protecting property rights, and in the state governments the function of regulating their exercise. This in itself is for a modern industrial community an unworkable distribution of functions, but it has been rendered still more impossible by the narrow interpretation which the Supreme Court has placed on the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. According to this interpretation the states are narrowly restricted in their attempt to regulate property rights, while at the same time the authority of the federal government is more than ever exerted chiefly to protect them.

If there is any truth in the analysis, we may safely infer from it a few important conclusions. There is a deeply rooted paternalism in our present system derived from our economic history and the very nature of the Constitution. That document confides the effective responsibility for the safeguarding of popular liberties not to the good sense and political self-control of the American people, but to the Supreme Court. There is, consequently, inherent in the American political system both a distrust of political democracy and an indisposition to permit the state governments to try out social experiments at the expense of individual rights. Under the influence of the ideas which prevail in the now dominant Republican party the federal authority is bound to emphasize and increase this paternalism. It will tend more and more to associate the free exercise of individual rights in thinking and speaking with public disorder, and to identify the unhampered exercise of property rights with public welfare and order. It will be futile to check this tendency towards federal paternalism by attempts to resurrect the prestige and authority of the state governments. They are not capable of coping with the centralizing tendencies which are coming to prevail in American business and social life. A really successful resistance to this paternalism can come only from the increasing consciousness of the wage-earning and agrarian classes that a small plutocracy, by its control of the essential functional activities of American life, is by way of compromising their own economic independence and the power of the American democracy legally to govern itself.

School, Church and State

PERHAPS it is fatuous to expect decisions upon issues of principle from courts and legislatures. Legal institutions exist to define, identify, and punish acts; principles are enunciated only by the voice of public opinion. But the recent decision in the Oregon School Law case was so completely irrelevant to the issues of principle involved as to be more than usually unsatisfying. Here was, presumably, a clear-cut issue: whether Oregon children should be permitted to get their schooling in educational institutions owned, directed, and staffed by a church. A legislature returned in an election said to have been dominated by the Ku Klux Klan was determined to prevent it. Did they, then, proceed to define the objectionable condition and to take steps to eliminate precisely what they objected to? They might, for example, have introduced measures regulating public instruction so stringently as to reform all the schools from within making it a matter of indifference whether nominally parochial schools continued to exist or not. This could have been accomplished through the state's control of the license to teach. But they did nothing of the sort. Without a word upon good or bad school practices they enacted a law compelling all children without exception to attend the public schools. This law has ultimately come before the Supreme Court and has been declared invalid. But here, also, no question of the merits of religious instruction in the schools nor of the quality of the educational training of parochial schools is even bruited. The right of the state to stipulate what education its children shall receive is hardly mentioned. The law is invalidated because it confiscated property.

What are the principles by which these issues should have been determined? Free, universal, and compulsory schooling is axiomatic. Here and there an individual expresses doubts. But such avowals are seldom made in public and cannot be taken as indicating any effective popular dissent from the principle. Public schools and general education are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a recent innovation. But the conception of an educated populace coincided with the development of the conception of popular sovereignty. The public schools are associated in the public mind with representative government and universal suffrage. These are but two phases of democratic society. Both, we like to think, are peculiarly American. Each is supported by a sentiment which, though it may accept modifications of detail, is unlikely to brook the open abandonment of the cherished institution. The foundation of American educational opinion is the free public school and universal (compulsory) education.

But the moment the question is asked why universal education is necessary to a democracy, a duality of opinion begins to appear. On one side it is argued that popular government presupposes popular enlightenment. The exercise of the suffrage calls for the ability to read and write at the very least, while the successful conduct of representative government depends upon a considerable portion of the electorate's being accessible to the appeal to reason, capable of considering the major issues of public policy upon which elections (theoretically) turn and of forming intelligent opinions upon them. Thus we talk a great deal, and put up with a great deal more talk from editors, lecturers, and commencement orators upon education for democracy, all upon the assumption that the spread of general enlightenment is the office of the common schools and the necessity of democracy.

There is, however, another necessity. Democracy no less than other governments, requires loyalty, and this means not merely the restraint of treason but the cultivation of belief in all the several figments of the national creed. In every civilization there must be many matters affecting propriety, fidelity, and filial piety which have to be sedulously inculcated in the young if that civilization is to proceed. It is quite possible, indeed, to regard this aspect of the training of the citizen as the most important one, or even the only important one. Better that the child should be quite illiterate, so many people would unhesitatingly say, and yet be God-fearing, upright, honest, and patriotic than that he should be crammed with knowledge and shaky in the "essentials of character." Furthermore, no civilization has ever made a sharp distinction between what we may call technical instruction (meaning such things as reading, writing, and arithmetic), and the indoctrination of its young in the cultural lore of the community. Very naturally, therefore, no such distinction has been made in the free, public schools with which democracy has buttressed itself. The schools train to read and write. They also supply the patterns of American civilization. In literature, Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell, and Bryant are held before the eyes of the American child in his tenderest years of schooling—the only years for those who are accordingly least likely to suffer any revision of their standards of cultivation. In the periods devoted to music certain songs are impressed upon the infant imagination, to wit, Holy Night, My Country 'Tis of Thee, The Star Spangled Banner, Columbia the Gem of the Ocean. Geography conveys to the pupils chiefly a sense of the greatness of American industrial achievement, and civics the righteousness of American government. At the conclusion of the day's undertakings they stand, assume a martial pose, and pledge allegiance to the flag.

All of this means simply that the public schools are committed to a double undertaking. This makes the definition of their function more than doubly difficult. The determination of purely educational standards, to which all schools could easily be made to conform, is tangled and impeded by the presence in purely educational subjects of cultural subject matter. Children must be taught to read. May the content of their primers be anything the teacher or her superior cares to select? Such a question cannot be answered on pedagogical grounds alone. But when the attempt is made to deduce an answer from cultural opinion it appears that cultural opinion is by no means unified. No standard of propriety in such matters has ever existed. It might be thought that the experience of the public schools represents a community standard of propriety in civic and religious teaching, and so it might if the practice of the public schools were based on principle and established by common agreement. But unfortunately such is not the case. The cultural level of the public schools is one of mean depth, a result of the flowing of the waters of education over the contours of the landscape. The waters have established their own level by gravitational compromise. In matters of religion, for example, the public schools must avoid all suggestion of any special creed or theology. But they must also avoid the appearance of irreligion, certainly of impiety. A spirit of reverence must pervade the schoolroom, but it must be reverence of Christianity-in-general.

Now Christianity-in-general is satisfactory to no one. Every church feels the necessity of supplementing the instruction of the public schools with special doctrinal classes of its own. One goes farther and insists upon carrying on schools of its own in which the spirit of reverence shall not be so diffuse. What has the public school, or public opinion for that matter, to oppose to the parochial school? So far, it has nothing. If free, compulsory, universal education had been conceived wholly in terms of technical training, equipment only in the instruments of knowing, it might then be proposed that the objective of the parochial school is an improper one, under the American conception of what constitutes education. But that has not been the case. The American conception quite definitely insists that the schools shall be godly schools, and this conception supplies the Roman Catholic Church

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with the principle upon which its educational theory is based: its conception of what constitutes a godly school. This is not the only point at which issue is possible, of course. One of the co-defendants in the Oregon School Law case was a military academy. A military academy is a school which takes a stricter view of patriotism than the public schools and, without seeking to introduce into education any element that is not already admitted and recognized, nevertheless undertakes to give it greater emphasis and greater purity.

The same confusion is clouding current discussion of the prohibition of evolution from the public schools of Tennessee. It is possible to regard the hypothesis of evolution as a purely scientific instrument, an intellectual device for dealing with various scientific facts, which therefore has nothing to do with the national beliefs and liturgies and by the same principle can no more be dispensed with in higher education than Grimm's law or Napier's analogies. The presumption that evolution has any theological significance whatever might be treated as a sheer illusion on the part of persons untrained in science. But as a matter of fact public discussion is moving in the opposite direction, and men of the scientific eminence of Dr. Henry F. Osborne are giving out public statements to the effect that evolution is not only entirely compatible with belief in God but is an expression of a particularly exalted conception of God's power. This sort of thing inevitably plays straight into the hands of the Tennessee reactionary. If evolution is a matter of theological belief there is no reason for including it in the curriculum and every reason for leaving it out. Dr. Osborne may believe it, but the Tennessee legislators do not. The American people do not demand that their children be brought up in reverence of evolution and they do demand that they be brought up in reverence of God. If there be the slightest question of an issue between them, evolution ought, properly, to go. Upon the only cultural principle we have developed, the parochial school has a much better case than evolution.

The inference from this argument would seem to be that the future of public education depends upon the clearer and more universal definition of all those matters of national belief which it is one function of the schools to propagate. But this would seem to be impossible for two reasons. In any community as large as the American nation there is too much variation of opinion to make uniformity tolerable to anyone. The central motive behind all the educational side-shows, the Dalton or Lincoln experiments as well as the parochial schools, is dissatisfaction with the national cookie-cutter. Furthermore, the conditions of our national life are changing too rapidly to make a firmer or more general agreement conceivable. Creeds are becoming more fluid with the acceleration of change in modern life, not more rigid. A fixed standard of culture for the schools is at present not to be thought of.

There remains only the abandonment, in the public schools of a progressive democracy, of the whole notion of using the schools as a medium of national culture. The principle upon which the public schools might then be organized, and to which all other schools might be required to conform, is that of exclusive attention to the technique of reading, writing, and arithmetic, of scientific experimentation and scholarly research. This is the principle upon which universities have always been conducted. Their object is the mastery of the tools of learning and the pursuit of all knowledge without discrimination, and they pretend no other piety whatsoever. The adoption of such a principle would clarify the entire educational situation. It would provide the only sound basis for eliminating the parochial pieties of church-conducted schools, as well as for preventing the manipulation of the scientific curriculum in the interests of popular theological susceptibilities. But it would also require the elimination from the schools of morning exercises and flag-day drills, courtesy lessons and deportment cards, and—dearest, probably, of all—Snowbound and The Psalm of Life. Such a clarification, however, is no more to be expected than a national ideal of culture. All these things symbolize an important part of American life. They, or their better equivalents, require to be imparted to the young in some way, and the method of the public schools seems to be the best way. Elementary school teachers, moreover, are little better qualified than their pupils to create a university in the classrooms of the primary school. No doubt they should not try.

Such are the difficulties that stand in the way of the decision of educational issues upon the basis of educational principles. They explain the confusion of the situation and the reluctance of the courts to become involved in it. But even so, they do not excuse the intellectual pusillanimity that pretends to object to parochial schools only because they are poor schools or defends evolution by the arguments of theology.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1925, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK
HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT, ROBERT HALLOWELL, SECRETARY AND PUBLISHER, DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER

EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY BRUCE BLIVEN ROBERT LITTELL
ALVIN JOHNSON C. E. AYRES GEORGE SOULE
ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY R. H. TAWNEY
DAVID FRIDAY H. N. BRAILSFORD LEO WOLMAN

RATES: SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Rules and Men

The Quarrel in the Federal Trade Commission

THE row that has broken out in the Federal Trade Commission is of the kind that makes campaign issues. Doubtless most of those who read about it in the news dispatches, despairing of understanding the technicalities involved, have postponed detailed consideration until they can be informed by an election orator. But they may have noted roughly the following succession of events:

1. President Coolidge, by a new appointment to the Commission, has changed its majority from Democratic to Republican. The majority is now dominated by men commonly known as "reactionary." Chairman Van Fleet, formerly a judge, was a Harding appointee sponsored by Senator Watson of Indiana, whose hostility to the Commission and championship of those whose wings it has clipped is well known. Commissioner Humphrey, the new appointee, is a "lame duck" Congressman reported to be in favor with Northwestern lumber interests.
2. The Commission as now constituted has adopted new rules of procedure curtailing its publicity and otherwise changing its practices in a way approved by Chambers of Commerce.
3. The minority, composed of former Chairman Huston Thompson and Commissioner Nugent, have objected strongly to the new rules. In violation of an anti-publicity rule, they have published their dissenting opinions in certain cases.
4. It has been suggested that the minority Commissioners may, under the law, be fined up to $5,000 or imprisoned up to one year for these violations, though the majority has so far discreetly refrained from initiating criminal action.
5. The Supreme Court of the United States has, by a unanimous decision, refused to uphold a demand of the Commission, issued under the old régime, for certain files and papers of the American Tobacco Company, and the Liggett and Myers Tobacco Company. It is remarked that in many other cases the courts have decided against the Commission.
6. The controversy has been headlined by statements of Senators Borah and Norris, supported by Senator LaFollette, that under these circumstances the Commission is useless and should be abolished.

Obviously it is important to know what this is all about. The Federal Trade Commission is charged with certain duties in respect to unfair competition and the anti-trust laws. It has long been under attack from those who are naturally restive under such laws. If the large business interests supporting the present administration want a free hand for anything they may wish to do, one of their first objectives, it would seem, would be to denature this Commission. The course of events has therefore given rise to what looks like a simple moral issue, and it has been seized and flourished as such by the minority and their supporters. There is little doubt that on the majority's side there are many who have precisely the same understanding of what has been done as the minority, and favor it for reasons exactly opposite to those of the protestants.

I

Before jumping into so merry a warfare, however, it may be of advantage to make a more careful diagnosis of the trouble. That demands, first of all, attention to the somewhat dull provisions of the law and the Commission's procedure. The very intricacy of the matter will, I believe, illuminate the moral, and for that reason I ask the reader to bear with the following exposition:

The act establishing the Commission, passed early in President Wilson's first administration, made unlawful "unfair methods of competition," and directed the Commission to proceed against anyone using such methods when it believes that a proceeding "would be to the interest of the public." No more detailed definition of "unfair methods of competition" or of "the interest of the public" is contained in the act.

The Clayton Act, passed by the same Congress, also directs the Commission to prevent certain specified practices which the act makes unlawful. The Commission was also given subsidiary duties and powers, which are less directly germane to the present issue.

The Commission considers action only when someone applies to it for relief. If this application is thought deserving of consideration, a subordinate examiner is delegated to inquire into the matter. The report of the examiner as to the facts and the bearing of the law upon them, with his recommendation, is first reviewed by the Chief Examiner or his assistant, and then, if approved, is referred to a Board of Review composed of two lawyers and an economist. The report of this Board is assigned to one of the Commissioners—taken in rotation. His report and recommendation, with all the other documents in the case, is eventually passed upon by the full Commission, which decides whether or not to issue a formal complaint against the party in question.

Not until such complaint is issued has the proceeding any formal status. The applicant for the complaint is not a party in the proceedings, and his identity is not made known. The Commission itself bears the responsibility for the complaint. With the service of the complaint, the proceeding becomes a public trial, in which one of the Commission's examiners acts as the court, and one of its attorneys

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

acts as prosecutor. The respondent must produce any evidence, must testify and must answer any lawful question, called for by the Commission. Shortly after the hearing the examiner prepares his findings. The respondent has an opportunity to offer exceptions to them, an oral argument is held before the Commission itself, briefs are filed by both parties, and in the course of time the Commission, as court, issues its own findings.

The result may be either a dismissal of the complaint, or an order to "cease and desist" from the methods complained of—so far as the Commission finally decides that the respondent has practiced them, and that they violate the law. There is no penalty; the Commission cannot order restitution to an injured party; it can merely tell the guilty party to be good in the future. If the respondent refuses to obey the order the Commission may call upon the Circuit Court of Appeals for enforcement. If he wants it reviewed he may appeal to the Circuit Court. The Court, however, must accept as conclusive the Commission's findings as to the facts "if supported by testimony." It can rule only on points of procedure and of law. Just what this distinction means in practice is not wholly clear—but more of that later.

II

Now as to the new rules.

One concerns the Board of Review. It has been the custom for the examiner investigating an application for a complaint to inform the accused party of the charges against him and invite him to make any statement or deliver any evidence he wishes, for the consideration of the Board of Review. The new rule, in addition, grants to the accused an informal hearing before the Board, not involving the taking of testimony, after the Board has reviewed the evidence.

The object of the rule seems to be to give the accused a chance to be heard, before the issuance of a complaint, by someone of greater authority and discretion than a subordinate examiner. The probable result would be the issuance of fewer complaints. Something in the nature of a trial would occur earlier in the proceedings, and the burden on the Commissioners might be lightened. The minority disapproves on the ground that the Board might thus be unduly influenced in favor of the accused, since his statement would not be under oath and the person making the charges would have no chance to answer it. And as no record of testimony would be kept, the Commissioners themselves would not have sufficient opportunity to review the recommendations of the Board.

Another rule merely underlines a clause in the law. It declares a policy not to entertain charges where the alleged violation of law is a private controversy over an injury redressable in the courts, except where the public's interest in maintaining competition is substantially involved. The minority claims that this policy has been followed in the past. There is, however, a difference in judgment as to when the public's interest is involved, and the disposition of the majority is to dismiss more charges on this ground than would the minority.

The most important changes concern the acceptance of voluntary stipulations from accused parties, and the publicity of proceedings. Between February and October, 1923, the Commission under the old régime tried an experiment. After the Board of Review had reported and one of the Commissioners had reviewed the case, the accused was offered a chance to admit the charge and promise to abandon his supposed wrongdoing as an alternative to facing trial on a formal complaint. Although this rule was rescinded, the new majority has adopted a similar one with increased emphasis. It declares a policy to settle all cases by stipulation except where "the public interest demands otherwise." And it extends the custom to the settlement of cases after a formal complaint has been issued.

The old publicity practice would be a hindrance to this policy. One of the chief motives of the accused in making a stipulation is a desire to avoid publicity which may injure his reputation and business. If he is going to be publicly accused of violating a law, he naturally prefers to put up a fight instead of admitting the charges. Under the old practice, the confession was usually not published, although there was no rule against publishing. But as soon as a complaint was issued it became a public record, and press releases concerning it were sent out. That rendered impracticable the making of stipulations after complaints were issued. The new publicity rule changes all this. It provides that there shall be no publication of settlements by stipulation made before a complaint is issued. And it provides that there shall be no publicity for a case after a complaint is issued, until the respondent files his answer. Even then, the Commission will make no statement—will issue no press releases—until the final disposition of the case, and, one infers, perhaps not then.

III

The majority favors settlements by stipulation "in the interest of economy . . . the dispatch of business, as well as the desirability of accomplishing the ends of the Commission with as little harm to respondents as possible." Why incur the expense and time necessary for trying a man to find out whether he should be ordered to cease and desist from a practice from which he is ready immediately and voluntarily to cease and desist? Or which he has already stopped? All admit that the Commission is far behind on its docket, that final dispositions are long delayed, that appropriations are not sufficient for the work. And it is not the Commission's function to punish, either by publicity or otherwise, but to prevent.

The minority opposes settlements by stipulation on the ground that they are unduly considerate of wrongdoers and not considerate enough of the per-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

son bringing the charges, of honest business men, or of the public's right to know who has injured it and how. Publicity is one of the chief instruments of the Commission; fear of it prevents far more bad practices than do specific proceedings. The majority answers that many respondents are not conscious wrongdoers, that questions as to what the law allows and does not allow are complex and concern technical business processes about which indignation of the public is often unjustified, and that the new rule does specify trial in cases where the business accused is inherently fraudulent—such as selling stock known to be worthless. The minority thinks the law is clear and that violators deserve moral reprobation, and it points out that a business not inherently fraudulent may still engage in outrageous fraudulent practices—such as the adulteration or misbranding of products. Should not the public know who has been cheating it in order to be wary in the future?

Concerning the publicity rule, the majority contends that it is unfair to broadcast an accusation which may prove unjustified until the respondent has a chance to publish his defense simultaneously.

IV

Basically, however, the objection to the publicity rule centres about the desire of the minority to make public protests about decisions on which it expects to disagree with the majority. The majority undoubtedly intends to dismiss more applications for complaints, and to accept more stipulations than has been the custom. Done by officials whom the minority trusted, this might improve administration of the law. But done by the men in question, it becomes "star chamber proceedings." The publicity rules will prevent general knowledge of dissents in such cases. A majority sufficiently in league with business malefactors could thus get away with murder. Evidently the minority expects that this one may do so. It should be added that the protest is not publicly made on such personal grounds. Mr. Thompson points out that when the Commission was composed entirely of men generally sympathetic with his views, a majority dismissed the application for a complaint against the U. S. Steel Corporation for the "Pittsburgh plus" basing of prices. Only the publication of his dissent brought about a re-hearing which led to the eventual sustaining of the complaint.

While reporting prevailing suspicions, it would be unfair not to mention the counter-comments upon the minority Commissioners. It is said that they have political ambitions and want to use the Commission for the sounding board of a popular crusade against business, which will bring them into prominence. . . . It is said that their attitude is demagogic rather than judicial. It is also said—and this comment is made by persons who do not question their integrity—that they are motivated too much by moral fervor and too little by understanding of modern economic tendencies. They see their task too simply—as one in which they are the champions of "the people" against "crooked business" rather than as one of searching inquiry and judicious decision.

In such a complex situation the clear moral issue tends to dissolve in a fog of uncertainties about the law, about economic policy, about efficient administration, and about the moral and intellectual stature of individual officials. It is a big job to decide what is "unfair competition," what are "the interests of the public" in such matters, and to apply such principle in concrete cases. Policing the business practice of the largest business nation of the world is no simple task. Necessarily anyone entrusted with this task must be granted a large measure of discretion. We have given the duty to five men, selected by political processes, without even the background of precedent, the professional training, or the ethical safeguards which insufficiently qualify the legal profession and the bench. Can they be trusted with secrecy? Or with publicity? Quis custodiet custodies? When the Commissioners fall out with each other, how is the public to decide?

To attempt to discover which, if any, of the present Commissioners are worthy of unquestioning support would be a superficial attack on the problem. We have here something deeper than a quarrel between good and bad men—or wise and foolish men. Perhaps it might help to inquire more broadly concerning the Commission's place in the scheme of things. What is supposed to be its function, and how has it performed its task? What, precisely, would be won for the nation if the minority should be victorious? Is the war worth winning? Might some greater good be gained in some other way? A brief survey of these difficult questions will occupy a second article.

GEORGE SOULE.

After Pain

An old forgetting
  Follows what befell,
And veiled regretting;
  Yet even this is well.

The light breath flutters,
  A thin sharp wing of wind.
The dark blood mutters
  Old histories to the mind.

Beyond the riot
  Of little pulse and breath
Again the quiet
  Avenues of death

Are far and lonely . . .
  And even this is well.
Death may be only
  A lie that liars tell.

MARJORIE MEEKER.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Public and the Geneva Minimum

THE history of these last five years' attempts to create a stable international system seems to have followed a course about as follows: Some incident or situation arises—failure of indemnity payments, a French invasion of Germany, a defiance of Europe by some Near-Eastern state—which reveals vividly and unmistakably the need for putting things in order. There is a great movement of public opinion. All parties everywhere declare themselves the ardent, even passionate, protagonists of peace. Almost any project which promised peace would be accepted by the public in this mood. The statesmen get busy and after shorter or longer delay—generally longer—produce a plan. But by this time the public is more occupied in other matters—less interested, that is, in international order. And, finding that the statemen's arrangements involve certain responsibilities and sacrifices, reject the project out of hand.

The most notable case of all was of course the American. Never was such ardent pacifism manifested by a people as by the American between the years 1915-1917. Leaders of both parties hastened to join "Leagues to Enforce Peace" and applaud the noble altruism of the president's dissertations. The establishment of peace in the world was America's divine mission in the fulfilment of which no sacrifice was to be too great. The War came, with it the passions of pugnacity. Not peace, but victory and the punishment of Germany became the supreme objective. And when the Covenant was actually presented to the country both parties had become absorbed in keen domestic conflicts. The world could go hang rather than that the Republican or Democratic Party should sacrifice a tactical advantage. It was monstrous anyhow that America should be bothered with obligations touching other people's troubles. It was the discovery, in the colder light of the morning after, that peace would actually ask something more than the preaching of high moralities to foreigners that seemed to have come as a stunning surprise to millions of Americans. Why, it would interfere with the prerogatives of the Senate! And that a nation should be asked to disturb the prestige of its Senators on behalf of world order was of course unthinkable.

But the same sort of thing occurs with the British public, home and Dominion. Lord Rothermere himself can be as ardent, and, conceivably, as sincere an advocate of peace as the next man. No sacrifice too great to secure it, except, when the time comes to subscribe to an agreement about it, the one specific sacrifice which happens to be necessary. If, in the case of the Dominions, it seems that there is the faintest chance of an international instrument's being used by, say, the Japanese, to secure a stronger diplomatic position, then all the advantages of such a document as an instrument of peace must be canceled. There seems to be no particular reason why this seesaw should not continue until the next war is well under way. Each side then of course would be genuinely persuaded that the other provoked it. "Heaven is our witness that we desired peace. All we asked was that our Divine Right of independence should be respected." Conscience, morality, religious sentiment cannot operate, or can only operate against peace because neither side is conscious of wrongdoing.

The difficulty is plain enough. Nowhere is there a widespread realization of the fact that if peace is to be obtained, it must be paid for by certain sacrifices, the assumption of certain obligations. There is genuine bewilderment at the suggestion. "How can there be obligations to foreigners since we ask nothing of them except to be left alone, as we intend to leave them alone?" The feeling in America, in the Dominions and in England, is that entering in these engagements we are either meddling in affairs that do not concern us, or shall be entangled in them, or that foreigners are "using" us unjustifiably. "Let each mind his own business, and we shall not go far wrong. If we mind our own business, we cannot be blamed if war breaks out."

Now so long as this is accepted universally as the obvious common sense of the situation, the statesmen will never be able to get ratification of any adequate instrument by the public in that colder, morning-after mood which usually follows the warm atmosphere in which international conferences assemble. And what in varying degrees has been the experience of President Wilson, Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Cecil and Mr. MacDonald, will be the experience of their successors.

What is needed is a wider realization on the part of the public of what is the minimum price of peace and why. Are indeed our statesmen and experts themselves agreed as to what that is? And can they deal with this undoubted characteristic of public opinion in our time unless they themselves know upon what essentials to concentrate?

The minimum is not difficult to state.

1. Germany too must have security. It is the very first condition of security for the Allies. If she remains in the position of having no rights that stronger neighbors do not care to respect, she will re-create her own strength, challenge our power whatever we may do to prevent her, and war will be repeated. The fact of having our hands free, of being uncommitted, will no more prevent our being drawn in than it did last time.

2. France cannot be expected to surrender the "security" of military preponderance, or to reduce that preponderance, unless she gets in exchange some diplomatic and political means of security.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

3. That substitute for French armaments cannot take the form of a general undertaking by Britain or others to protect French frontiers, whatever France's political behavior. She cannot be given a blank check. Otherwise we might find ourselves committed to a war which had resulted from a Poincarist policy of provocation. Any undertaking to protect France must obviously be subject to political good behavior.

4. If the test of that good behavior is to be the submission of disputes to third-party judgment, the law of the judgment, the recognized rights of nations, must be (a) more clearly defined, (b) reciprocal. Otherwise we shall never know what we are submitting to judgment, and universal arbitration will become in these circumstances either gross recklessness on the part of statesmen, or an insincere undertaking. To the degree of course that law grows, "independence" and "self-determination" become qualified.

Is it impossible to secure a general acceptance of the foregoing among the public as the recognized price of peace? So that if a man declares himself in favor of peace, he by that declares himself ready at least to pay this minimum price for it?

It is in a sense hopeful that the things which would make the alternative policy feasible are rejected on what might be called moral grounds. The policy of the Treaties with their one-sided disarmament clauses and their crude coercion of Germany presumes a Europe spending its time through eternity sitting on the head of a nation or a group of nations representing a hundred million souls more or less. The policy is of course unworkable, but it is only unworkable because everybody realizes that we cannot do certain things which previous civilizations of a very high order would have done as a matter of course. If it were possible for us to adopt Roman or Egyptian methods and to transform central Europe into a slave reserve, converting these lusty Rhinelanders or Bavarians into mere industrial machines; or if, to adopt methods common a little earlier in history, we just knocked them on the head, this business of "keeping Germany down" would be entirely feasible. But the absurdity of the accepted policy is that with all our talk of disarmament and rendering her powerless we propose to leave her the greatest of all arms and the greatest source of all power, namely, sound human material, access to scientific knowledge, full means of cultivating it, liberty to build up a fresh tradition of cohesion, freedom of travel, freedom to develop her own resources. All this sooner or later of course would make her invulnerable.

Why do we grant all this? There are no insuperable material obstacles to a policy of physical enslavement or extermination. The obstacles are moral, certain universally accepted ideas, ideas which have now become "intuitive." But if we have got that far, why could it not also become "intuitive" on the part of the public to recognize so simple a proposition as that security must be two-sided and that it cannot work if the security of one party means the insecurity of the other; that we really cannot keep asking Germany to accept a situation which we should resist to the death if it were asked of us? Yet, get this one point really admitted and the rest almost inevitably follows. If Germany too is entitled to security, France obviously must not be predominant and free to enforce her military predominance; still less could we use our power to enable her to enforce the anti-social claim to be judge in her own cause; and if we are to submit to the law, we must not go on talking about complete independence, but get clearer notions of what the law shall be.

What I think I am pleading for is a concentration by all those in any way responsible for public opinion in international affairs upon securing a wider recognition of certain very elementary principles touching certain elementary practical points, a recognition plainly at present lacking.

Perhaps it was not possible to do much to secure this recognition while a certain war-time theory of international politics held the field, the theory (faithfully embodied in the Treaties) being that the world was divided into Good nations and Bad nations—the Good nations being of course the British, the Czechoslovaks, the Japanese, the French, the Portuguese, the Italians, the Haitians, the Americans, the Poles, the Rumanians, the Russians (if White) and the Bad of course being the Austrians, Hungarians, Bulgarians and Germans; and that the way to get Peace, Democracy, Righteousness, was to give arms to the Good and take them from the Bad, placing the latter within the power of the former. We have abandoned the theory, although the public does not seem to notice that it is in fact adhering to the policy to which that theory gave rise. If a sounder theory could become more conscious in the public mind, the statesmen would encounter less difficulty in securing ratification for some form of that policy which can alone give us European stability.

NORMAN ANGELL.

Rebuke

Must I go out and tip each finger
With little winking radiant stars
So where I touch you, there, will linger
Fine celestial scars?

My hands are weighed with swinging blood
That thrusts to change its lonely tides;
Tonight the willow crowds its bud,
The streams have trembling sides.

The south has lifted up a fern
And touched the wind that moves my curtain.
Though countless universes churn,
Only this is certain:

That you are bonded in a quest
With swiftened water, sweetened air,
To suffer earth upon your breast,
Unburdened there.

GEORGE O'NEIL.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

On the Wrong Side of the Sword *

ACROSS the broad continent of woman's life falls the shadow of a sword. On one side all is correct, definite, orderly; the paths are straight, the trees regular, the sun shaded; escorted by gentlemen, protected by policemen, wedded and buried by clergymen, she has only to walk demurely from cradle to grave and no one will touch a hair of her head. But on the other side all is confusion. Nothing follows a regular course. The paths wind between bogs and precipices. The trees roar and rock and fall in ruin. There too what strange company is to be met—in what bewildering variety! Stonemasons hobnob with Dukes of the blood royal —Mr. Blore treads on the heels of his Grace the Duke of Argyll. Byron rambles through, the Duke of Wellington marches in with all his orders on him. For in that strange land gentlemen are immune; any being of the male sex can cross from sun to shade with perfect safety. In that strange land money is poured out lavishly; bank-notes drop on to breakfast plates; pearl rings are found beneath pillows; champagne flows in fountains; but over it all broods the fever of a nightmare and the transiency of a dream. The brilliant fade; the great mysteriously disappear; the diamonds turn to cinders, and the Queens are left sitting on three-legged stools shivering in the cold. That great Princess, Harriette Wilson, with her box at the Opera and the Peerage at her feet, found herself, before she was fifty, reduced to solitude, to poverty, to life in foreign parts, to marriage with a Colonel, to scribbling for cash whatever she could remember or invent of her past.

Nevertheless it would be a grave mistake to think that Harriette repented of her ways or would have chosen another career had she had the chance. She was a girl of fifteen when she stepped across the sword, and became, for reasons which she will not specify, the mistress of the Earl of Craven. A few facts leak out later. She was educated at a convent and shocked the nuns. Her parents had fifteen children; their home was "truly uncomfortable"; her father was a Swiss with a passion for mathematics, always on the point of solving a problem and furious if interrupted; while the unhappiness of her parents' married life had decided Harriette before she was ten "to live free as air from any restraint but that of my own conscience." So she stepped across. And at once, the instant her foot touched those shifting sands, everything wobbled; her character, her principles, the world itself—all suffered a sea change. Forever after (it is one of the curiosities of her memoirs—one of the obstacles to any certain knowledge of her character) she is outside the pale of ordinary values, and must protest till she is black in the face and run up a whole fabric of lies into the bargain before she can make good her claim to a share in the emotions of human kind. Could an abandoned woman love a sister, could a mere prostitute grieve genuinely for a mother's death? Mr. Thomas Seccombe in the Dictionary of National Biography had his doubts. Harriette Wilson, he said, described her sister's death "with an appearance of feeling," whereas to Mr. Seccombe Lord Hertford's kindness in soothing the same creature's last hours was indisputably genuine.

Outcast as she was, her position had another and an incongruous result. She was impelled, though nothing was farther from her liking than serious thoughts, to speculate a little curiously about the laws of society, to consult, with odd results, the verdict of "my own conscience." For example, the marriage law—was that as impeccably moral as people made out? "I cannot for the life of me divest myself of the idea that, if all were alike honorable and true, as I wish to be, it would be unnecessary to bind men and women together by law, since two persons who may have chosen each other from affection, possessing heart and honor, could not part, and, where there is neither the one nor the other, even marriage does not bind. My idea may be wicked or erroneous," she adds hastily, for what could be more absurd than that Harriette Wilson should set herself up as a judge of morality—Harry, as the gentlemen called her, whose only rule of conduct was "One wants a little variety in life," who left one man because he bored her, and another because he drew pictures of cocoa trees upon vellum paper, and seduced poor young Lord Worcester, and went off to Melton Mowbray with Mr. Meyler, and, in short, was the mistress of any man who had money and rank and a person that took her fancy? No, Harriette was not moral, nor refined, nor, it appears, very beautiful, but merely a bustling, bouncing, vivacious creature with good eyes and dark hair and "the manners of a wild schoolboy," said Sir Walter Scott, who had dined in her presence. But it cannot be doubted—otherwise her triumph is inexplicable—that gifts she had, gifts of dash and go and enthusiasm, which still stir among the dead leaves of her memoirs and impart even to their rambling verbosity and archness and vulgarity some thrill of that old impetuosity, some flash of those fine dark eyes, some fling of those wild schoolboy manners which, when furbished up in plumes and red plush and diamonds, held our ancestors enthralled.

She was, of course, always falling in love. She saw a stranger riding with a Newfoundland dog in Knightsbridge, and lost her heart to his "pale expressive beauty" at once. She venerated his door-

* The Memoirs of Harriette Wilson. Written by Herself. Two volumes. London: The Navarre Society. £2 2s.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

knocker even, and when Lord Ponsonby—for Lord Ponsonby it was—deserted her, she flung herself sobbing on a doorstep in Half-Moon Street and was carried, raving, and almost dying, back to bed. Large and voluptuous herself, she loved for the most part little men with small hands and feet, and, like Mr. Meyler, skins of remarkable transparency, "churchyard skins," foreboding perhaps an early death, "yet it would be hard to die; in the bloom of youth and beauty, beloved by everybody, and with thirty thousand a year." She loved, too, the Apollo Belvedere, and sat entranced at the Louvre, exclaiming in ecstasy at the "quivering lips—the throat!" till it seemed as if she must share the fate of another lady who sat by the Apollo, "whom she could not warm, till she went raving mad, and in that state died." But it is not her loves that distinguish her; her passions tend to become perfunctory; her young men with fine skins and large fortunes innumerable; her rhapsodies and recriminations monotonous. It is when off duty, released from the necessity of painting the usual picture in the usual way, that she becomes capable of drawing one of those pictures which only seem to await some final stroke to become a page in Vanity Fair or a sketch by Hogarth. All the materials of comedy seem heaped in disorder before us as she, the most notorious woman in London, retired to Charmouth to await the return of her lover, Lord Worcester, from the Spanish wars, trots to church on the arm of the curate's aged father, or peeps from her window at the rustic beauties of Lyme Regis tripping down to the sixpenny Assembly Rooms with "turbans or artificial flowers twined around their wigs," to dance at five in the evening on the shores of the innocent sea. So a famous prima donna, hidden behind a curtain in strict incognito, might listen to country girls singing a rustic ballad with contempt and amusement—and a dash of envy too, for how simply the good people accepted her. Harriette could not help reflecting, how kindly they sympathized with her anxiety about her husband at the wars, and sat up with her to watch for the light of the postwoman's lantern as she came late at night over the hill from Lyme Regis with letters from Mr. Wilson in Spain! All she could do to show her gratitude was to pay twice what they asked her, to shower clothes upon ragged children, to mend a poor countrywoman's roof, and then, tired of the rôle of Lady Bountiful, she was off to join Lord Worcester in Spain.

Now, for a moment, before the old story is resumed, sketched with a stump of rapid charcoal, springs into existence, to fade forever after, the figure of Miss Martha Edmonds, her landlady's sister. "I am old enough," exclaimed the gallant old maid, "and thank God I am no beauty . . . I have never yet been ten miles from my native place, and I want to see the world." She declared her intention of escorting Mrs. Wilson to Falmouth; she had her ancient habit made up for the purpose. Off they started, the old maid and the famous courtesan, to starve and freeze in an upper room of a crowded Falmouth inn, the winds being adverse, until, in some mysterious way, Mrs. Wilson got into touch first with the Consul and then with the Captain, who were so hospitable, so generous, so kind that Aunt Martha bought a red rose for her cap, drank champagne, took a hand at cards, and was taught to waltz by Mr. Brown. Their gaieties were cut short, however; a letter demanded Mrs. Wilson's instant presence in London, and Aunt Martha, deposited in Charmouth, could only regret that she had not seen something of life a little sooner, and declared that there "was a boldness and grandeur about the views in Cornwall which far exceeded anything she had seen in Devonshire."

Involved once more with Meylers, Lornes, Lambtons, Berkeleys, Leicesters, gossiping as usual in her box at the Opera about this lady and that gentleman, letting young noblemen pull her hair, tapping late at night at Lord Hertford's little private gate in Park Lane, Harriette's life wound in and out among the bogs and precipices of the shadowy underworld which lies on the far side of the sword. Occasionally the jingling and junketing was interrupted by a military figure; the great Duke himself, very like a ratcatcher in his red ribbon, marched in; asked questions; left money; said he remembered her; had dreamed of her in Spain. "I dreamed you came out on my staff," he said. Or there was Lord Byron sitting entirely alone, dressed in brown flowing robes at a masquerade, "bright, severe, beautiful," demanding "in a tone of wild and thrilling despondency," 'Who shall console us for acute bodily anguish?' " Or again the spangled curtain goes up, and we see those famous entertainers, the sisters Wilson, sitting at home at their ease, sparring and squabbling and joking about their lovers: Amy, who adored black-puddings; good-natured Fanny, who doted upon donkey-riding; foolish Sophie, who was made a Peeress by Lord Berwick and dropped her sisters; Moll Raffles; Julia, niece to Lord Carysfort and daughter to a maid of honor with the finest legs in Europe—there they sit gossiping profanely and larding their chatter with quotations from Shakespeare and Sterne. Some died prematurely; some married and turned virtuous; some became villains, sorceresses, serpents, and had best be forgotten; while as for Harriette herself, she was scandalously treated by the Beauforts, had to retire to France with her colonel, would continue to tell the truth about her fine friends so long as they treated her as they did, and grew, we cannot doubt, into a fat, good-humored, disreputable old woman, who never doubted the goodness of God, or denied that the world had treated her well or regretted, even when the darkness of obscurity and poverty blotted her entirely from view, that she had lived her life on the shady side of the sword.

VIRGINIA WOOLF.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Washington Notes

THE more the situation in the next session is considered, the clearer it becomes that the President will have to place his real reliance on the party majority in the House rather than the Senate for support of his policies and program.

This is a reversal of the usual form. It has been customary in the past for the Executive to consider the Senate the check against House extravagance, the bulwark against a stream of wild legislation from the House. This time the House promises, so far as the Republican majority is concerned, to be vastly better disciplined and more amenable to administration desires than the Senate. For one thing the Republicans in the House made a more thorough job of throwing out the Progressives. In the House there are no Borahs nor Johnsons nor Norrises nor Couzenses who while still classed as Republicans are at times—as they were notably in the Warren fight—as determinedly irregular as any Progressive Senator.

Some time ago I predicted that if Mr. Longworth were elected Speaker he would acquire and assert a dominance over his party in the House far more striking than that of any predecessor since Cannon. Everything I have heard since his caucus victory and the adjournment of Congress confirms me in this belief. It is distinctly not his purpose, now that he has landed the Speakership, to sit back content with the honor, emoluments and dignity of the place. His purpose is to utilize the prestige of the position to strengthen himself as a party leader and compel more complete recognition of him as a factor.

In the next session he will more often and more accurately represent and speak for Mr. Coolidge, in my judgment, than will Senator Curtis or Senator Wadsworth at the other end of the Capitol. While they are officially recognized as party leaders neither of these is as close to the President as the two Senators from his own State—Butler and Gillett. Of course, the trouble about the Massachusetts Senators is that no one follows them. It is also worth noting in passing that between Mr. Longworth and Senator Wadsworth there is the closest personal friendship.

Taking it all in all, my bet is that "Nick" will be the most effective single party leader in Congress during the rest of the Coolidge administration. He will make a dignified, satisfactory and popular presiding officer but those who think he has abdicated his House leadership in taking his new job are off the track. He has cinched it.

Not long ago, in New York, I talked with one of the biggest and sanest Democrats left in the country whose active interest in politics ended a good many years ago but who will always retain his academic interest. To me his views as to the future are always interesting and worth while. As he sees the politics of the country today the situation is something like this: "The Republican party has definitely and flatly become the conservative party with a policy that amounts to saying that anything that Big Business wants to do is right. It is also the dominant party; and the last election proved that the two-party idea is so deeply imbedded in the minds of the people that departure from it is not practical. If the Democratic party could be sectionally amalgamated and harmonized, made to stop running about in circles and given a few clear, simple but liberal principles it could take its position as the liberal party, which is its natural field.

"What it would then have to do would be to conduct almost continuously a campaign of education gradually converting the people to progressive ideas one at a time. The Republican or conservative party does not have to conduct an educational campaign because it does not want to change anything; it merely wants to stand still. It is the liberal party that has to do the educating.

"This would mean that at long intervals the Democratic or liberal party would be put into power, and enabled to consolidate its liberal principles, one progressive step at a time. As soon as it had achieved the consolidation of a single step the conservative party would come along and take charge. In the nature of things the conservative party would remain in power about four-fifths of the time. That is the proper proportion. Less than that would not give the liberal party sufficient time to educate the people and prepare them for the progressive steps."

There is nothing particularly new or original in these ideas. However, they seem to me essentially sound and particularly applicable to the present deplorable state of the Democratic party. It is so logically clear that there is no possibility of competing successfully with the Republicans along conservative lines that one would think every Democratic leader from every section would agree at least on the direction in which the party should be headed.

But they do not. There is apparently neither vision nor force left in the Democratic ranks. Prejudice and passion are far too strong to permit them to unite on any single fundamental principle. The time may come when the grip of the reactionary Democratic bosses in the East can be broken and the liberal element take permanent control. Unquestionably they would be defeated in the first election to follow but in the end they would win.

At best it is a poor prospect. There isn't much fun being a Democrat these days.

The notable depression among the friends of "Jimmie" Wadsworth over the prospective candidacy of Governor Smith for the Senate in 1926 has seemed almost out of proportion to the situation. True enough, "Al" is a terrific vote getter. He is now at the very peak of his popularity and with a greater prestige than ever before. Still, he has his enemies within the party and Senator Wadsworth is a popular fellow himself. The latter would of course have a tremendous fight on his hands but it does not seem on the surface quite so hopeless as the melancholy mood of some of his friends suggests. The real reason for their gloom was explained the other day by one of the shrewdest of the present day New York political analysts who is a very real factor in his party organization and who came to Washington last week on a mission not unconnected with filling vacancies that may shortly occur in the Coolidge Cabinet.

"Don't you know what the trouble is?" said he. "It's the Anti-Saloon League. If 'Al' and 'Jimmie' are the opposing candidates, the drys will put up an independent candidate of their own. They will have to. No out-and-out dry—and there are thousands of them in New York State—could vote for either 'Al' or 'Jimmie' for the Senate without violating his principles. They must have a candidate of their own and the dry leaders—the real ones I mean—have already determined upon that policy. 'Jimmie' and his friends know it. That's what makes them sick. It's bad enough to have to fight 'Al' without a handicap, but with an independent third candidate in the field it

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

makes it pretty sad for 'Jimmie' because the great bulk of the real drys are up-state Republicans.

"Without a candidate of their own the inherent strength of their Republicanism would keep most of them in line. Certainly, if they did not vote for 'Jimmie' they would not for 'Al.' But with an independent dry candidate who will also be a Republican 'Jimmie's' goose is cooked. The up-state dry Republicans could satisfy their consciences without voting for a Democrat. It would make Smith's election sure and Wadsworth knows it. Is there any wonder he is worried?"

It cannot be doubted that Mr. Coolidge was tremendously pleased with his visit to Minnesota. Why shouldn't he be? The first time he spoke in that State five years ago he was booed by the farmers at the State fair. This time he was greeted by a greater crowd than ever before turned out to hear a President speak and his reception was overwhelmingly enthusiastic.

To those in Washington much edification was derived from the manner in which the picked members of the "corps of correspondents" interpreted the Presidential attitude, ably assisted of course by the Presidential Secretary and advisors on board the special train. He certainly had a grand "press" as a result of that trip. With one accord the writers declared he had won the Northwest, predicted the election of Senator Lenroot in Wisconsin and the bringing of the whole Northwest section, shorn of its radicalism and fully repentant, into the Coolidge fold.

However, let's not carp. The fact remains that he did get a great reception in Minnesota and, as his press agents proudly boast, talked to more people in one day than any other President has done. They do not go so far as to say he said as much as some of them.

Washington. T. R. B.

Houdini

HOUDINI is a short strong stocky man with small feet and a very large head. Seen from the stage, his figure, with its short legs and its pugilist's proportions, is less impressive than at close range, where the real dignity and force of his enormous head appear. Wide-browed and aquiline-nosed, with a cleanness and fitness almost military, he suggests one of those enlarged and idealized busts of Roman generals or consuls. So it is rather the man himself than the showman, the personality of the stage, who is interesting. Houdini is remarkable among magicians in having so little of the smart-aleck about him: he is a tremendous egoist, like many other very able persons, but he is not a cabotin. When he performs tricks, it is with the directness and simplicity of an expert giving a demonstration and he talks to his audience, not in his character of conjuror, but quite straightforwardly and without patter. His professional formulas—such as the "Will wonders never cease!" with which he signalizes the end of a trick—have a quaint conventional sound as if they had been deliberately acquired as a concession to the theatre. For preëminently Houdini is the honest earnest craftsman which his German accent and his plain speech suggest—enthusiastic, serious-minded, thoroughgoing and intelligent.

Houdini is in fact a German Jew (Houdini is not his real name)—born in Wisconsin. In his youth, he served an apprenticeship to dime-museums and circuses; acquiring a mastery of the whole repertoire of magic, he eventually took his place, with a show of his own, as a magician of the first rank. Until recently, Houdini has been most celebrated for his cultivation of the "escape," extricating himself from every conceivable kind of strong-box, straitjacket, hand-cuffs and chains under every conceivable kind of circumstances; and, though this is a department of trickery which has always seemed to the present writer somewhat less artistically interesting than the others, it is characteristic of Houdini that, not content with the ingenuities of illusion and the perfection of sleight-of-hand, he should have chosen to excel in that branch of magic which was most dangerous, which took him furthest from the theatre and which offered most opportunity for the untried. Lately, however, Houdini has achieved a new kind of celebrity in connection with the investigation of spiritualism. Formerly, it was the custom for spiritualistic phenomena to be authenticated by scientists of various sorts and, as a result of this method of research, many surprising discoveries were reported—culminating, at the end of the War, in the ectoplasm revelations. When the French magicians, however, of whose committee Houdini had been made a member, challenged the ectoplasm mediums to admit magicians to their seances, they refused to perform under these conditions. And when Houdini was included in the Scientific American's committee to investigate Mrs. Crandon, the Boston medium, who nearly won the prize offered by that publication for the production of genuine phenomena, he detected her tricks and constructed a cabinet which made it impossible for her to reproduce them. The truth is, of course, that in a committee of scientists of which Houdini is a member it is Houdini who is the scientist. Doctors, psychologists and physicists are no better qualified to check up on spiritualistic phenomena than lawyers, artists or clergymen. They are deceived as readily by magicians on the stage as anyone else in the audience and it is equally easy for them to be deceived by magicians as mediums. The problem is whether the medium is a medium or merely a conjuror, and this is something which only a conjuror can find out.

Houdini is thus perhaps the first important investigator of spiritualism who is really competent for the task. He is one of the most accomplished magicians in the world and—what is rare—he has brought to the study of trickery a genuine scientific curiosity: he seems actually now to have become more interested in understanding how effects are produced than in astonishing people with them, and to derive more satisfaction from merely lecturing on the methods of the mediums than in contriving illusions of his own. He has collected a library of books on trickery, occultism and kindred subjects which is said to be the largest in the world; and he has himself published a book on spiritualism called A Magician Among the Spirits and a pamphlet setting forth his observations in connection with Mrs. Crandon and with Argamasilla, a Spanish clairvoyant who claimed to be able to read through metal. He has even been at great pains to expose retrospectively Daniel Home's celebrated levitation feat of fifty years ago, analyzing the statements of the witnesses and measuring for himself the space between the windows out of one and into the other of which Home is alleged to have floated but which Houdini has now made it appear more probable he navigated by means of a rope. As a result of his study of the supernatural, Houdini has come to the following explicit conclusions: he believes that spiritualism is completely fraudulent because in all the cases with which he is ac-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quainted in which expert witnesses have been called, their testimony has gone against the mediums; he asserts that telepathy is impossible and that he can himself reproduce by trickery any telepathic phenomena of which he has ever heard; that the Hindu miracles of which the legends are always reaching us from the East—the Indian Rope Trick, the stopping of the pulse and the Yogis who allow themselves to be buried alive—are either tricks long understood by magicians or travelers' stories which have never been authenticated; and that all other supposed supernatural occurrences are to be put down either to coincidence or to hallucination on the part of those who have reported them.

Houdini says that he has never yet been duped, that he has been able to guess all the tricks he has ever seen, but that he lives in continual terror of being outwitted by a telepathist or a medium—in which case his dogmatic denials would be made to look ridiculous. And this has given him a certain edge and excitement as of a man engaged in a critical fight: where he once challenged the world to tie him up, he now challenges it to convince him of the supernatural; and, for all his confidence—sometimes thought excessive—he is keenly conscious of the danger of his position. It may be indeed that Houdini has appeared at a critical moment in the history of spiritualism and that he is destined to play an important rôle in it. It is difficult for a spectator at one of his Hippodrome performances to see how a credulous disposition toward mediums can long survive public exposures of this kind. Here Houdini reproduces the phenomena of bell-ringing, the floating megaphone and the visitation of mysterious hands in full sight of the audience, who see how the tricks are done, but to the bewilderment of a blindfolded man who sits on an isolated platform with him. When one has seen Houdini possess himself of a megaphone and manipulate it with his head while both his hands and feet are being held, one is not astonished that Mrs. Crandon should have been able to fool the editors of The Scientific American with the same trick in a dark room. And when one realizes that Houdini by resorting to a few simple expedients which he afterwards exposes can tell members of the audience whom he has never seen before, their names, their addresses and facts about their private affairs, one is prepared to believe any marvels of this kind which the mediums, with their elaborate intelligence service, are reported to accomplish.

The real situation, of course, is, however, that among people who frequent seances the difficulty is not for the mediums to convince them of the genuineness of the phenomena but for them to fail sufficiently badly to make their clients suspicious. A professional medium once told a friend of the writer that on one occasion when the seance had gone wrong and he had found it impossible to extricate his hand, he had been obliged to represent the spirit presence by touching the client with his cheek: the medium was in a panic because he realized immediately that he was unshaved; but the lady quickly reassured him after the seance by explaining that she considered it their most successful: the spirit hand had communicated its divine essence in the form of an electrical pricking. One remembers also the French savant who reported to his government that, as the result of prolonged and careful researches, he had established in respect to spirits that they had hair, that they were warm, that they had beating hearts, that their pulse could be felt in their wrists and that their breath contained carbon dioxide.

EDMUND WILSON.

"Rejoice Not, O Philistia, All Of Thee . . ."

When on lovely London
The Great Plague came down
With the dumb jaws of locusts
To devour the town,
The lord shook in his velvet
Like the girl in her nightgown.

And fevered men ran naked
Crying through the street,
"The plague! Repent!" And then, "The plague!"
With breath like leaping heat;
The neighbors pulled the shutters
To dull the stintless bleat.

The clerk among his candles,
The peasant in his shed,
Never looked for morning
When he went to bed,
Often looked for burial,
Alive or dead.

There was no peace in Canterbury,
There was none in Rome,
When the plague rode Europe
As a starved knight rides home
From wars that are unending
Through fields as thin as foam.

The towns were torn with ditches
Like men in garments rent.
Lovers and fathers and beggars
Because their tears were spent
Laughed at the dry-lipped crying,
"Repent! Repent! Repent!"

Thank God now London's quiet;
In Paris or in Prague
Who would now remember
A nightmare, awful and vague,
Of a naked man, running, running,
Whose whisper is, *"The plague!"*

BABETTE DEUTSCH.

"When We Have Heard That Time Is Only Seeming"

When we have heard that time is only seeming
And there's no age for us, and no man dies
Save in a dream which still he goes on dreaming,
Then I remember looking in your eyes
Asking, who has not seen, in a few years,
Loves altered and faiths changed and hair gone gray
And from a mistress this bright spell of hers
Stolen, little by little, day by day?
Have we not heard the footfalls of our time
And glimpsed what he has taken as he passed
But dared not raise a hand to challenge him,
Knowing too well he will take all at last,
Knowing ourselves still poorer, even though it seem
That he has robbed us only in our dream?

MAXWELL ANDERSON.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Living Christ

Once God was Spirit; then he became Man; he is becoming Rabble.—Fr. Nietzsche.

IN THE introduction to the Lang, Leaf, and Myer translation of the Iliad there occurs a defense of Pope's translation which surprises high school boys educated to believe that the Classic Age was without intelligence and feeling, and that Pope traduced the vigor and morning-glow of Homer to write Achilles's wrath, to Greece the direful spring. The defense is that Homer is for all time, and the proof of it is that an age so hostile to his own still finds something, if not everything, in him; and further that only by translating him into its own vocabulary, only by feeling him in its own style, can each age appreciate him. To be sure we learn more about Pope and his age from the translation than we do about Homer.

If a work of art is so adaptable, how much more so a religion! God may remain the Supreme Being, the Unalterable, or the Immanent Will, but in Christ each age finds itself, and each "discovery of Jesus" is a discovery of a spiritual temper. After the classic lives of Dean Farrar and Renan, our immediate time has given us several interpretations: Jesus as social reformer, as mystic and genius, as artist. But in the opinion of business men, our age is preëminently a business age, and it was natural for an advertising man to write the story of Jesus, the founder of modern business.*

The temptation to ridicule Bruce Barton's effort is not really irresistible. He is ignorant of the history of Christianity, and seems not to know that the "organization which conquered the world" was largely the creation of St. Paul, whom he considers inferior to the Master in the psychology of salesmanship; he is ignorant also of the ferment in the Roman Empire, and can say that there was no *demand* (his italics) for a new religion at the time. His own slapdash psychology assures us that weakness does not appeal to women, that "they are *not* drawn by weakness."

There have, of course, been books more ill-informed which yet contained a spiritual truth. The truth about Jesus as it is here given is that he had "personal magnetism" and "organizing ability," and achieved "executive success," since he "picked twelve men from the bottom ranks of business and forged them into an organization which conquered the world"; so that it is not remarkable that every one of his conversations is "worthy of the attentive study of any sales-manager," busy as sales-managers often are. *"As he passed by* he called Matthew. No executive in the world can read that sentence without acknowledging that here indeed is the Master." Babbitt is also Sandow, the "type of outdoor man whom our modern thought most admires" and when he whipped the money-changers from the temple "the sleeve dropped back to reveal muscles hard as iron." He was a "sociable man" and had a good office routine, since he did not tire late in the afternoon and always had time to see people. But supremely he had good business methods, was an advertiser of the first order, and was imbued with the very principles of modern business which late in 1922 displaced "efficiency" with the magic word "service." He contributed, one gathers, to the vocabulary if not to the funds of the Y. M. C. A., in his jolly advertisement of the Prodigal Son: "For this my son which was gone has *come back* [italics, this time, not the author's]; he was dead to decency and idealism. Now he has cleaned up his thinking and is alive again." His was "the higher type of leadership" which, we know, approves of big appropriations for advertising.

The greatest electric sign, to continue, is the evening stars (perhaps "they satisfy"); but best of all is the free advertisement of the news columns. Jesus in one day put over six front page news stories, all advertising his product. One of them, imagined by Mr. Barton, is:

PROMINENT TAX COLLECTOR JOINS NAZARETH FORCES

MATTHEW ABANDONS BUSINESS TO PROMOTE NEW CULT

GIVES LARGE LUNCHEON

But what was he advertising? The flyleaf of this book carries the text, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's *business?*" (the author's italics). And what is business? Service!

In a review of this book in the New York World—a review beginning "Christ is risen, in the estimation of American business"—Professor Walter Pitkin suggests that it is all a process of rationalization, proving that our Garys, Rockefellers and Morgans are great because they are Christlike. But the glow in Mr. Barton's phrases about big business makes me believe that he is seriously trying to sell Jesus to America because Jesus was businesslike.

That is why, for a vulgar age, he finds it necessary to destroy all traces of austerity, even of nobility; the agony in the garden and on the cross is reduced to being a good loser, and the whole narrative is the "finest, most exalted success story." It is as if we have become so petty that we must belittle everything else, because we cannot bear to think of greatness, as people belittle loveliness because in their ugly lives they cannot bear to behold beauty. To them religion, like art, is something outside of daily experience, to be applied to life like a fringe or a flounce. We are more familiar with this type of mind in another connection. Confronted with high spirits, or high godliness, by the artist and philosopher and true man of science, it first strikes, furious to destroy what it cannot understand. Finally it accepts great men, but denies their greatness, in a process called "humanizing," so that Goethe's philanderings are proof that Faust is a great play, Landor's temper with a cook outweighs his Conversations, Lincoln's funny stories "endear" him. The new biography is of assistance here, and if we discover that Leonardo liked his eggs boiled four minutes we think more warmly of the Last Supper. So God, too, must go through a process of being made human; and it is amusing to note that Mr. Barton, apparently unaware of recent developments in Italy, suggests that Joseph has not had his due reward (although, poor soul, he lacked the organizing ability of Jesus). First God, then Christ, finally Mary becomes inaccessible, too close to divinity; Joseph is untouched and one can turn to him for sympathetic understanding. As Mr. Barton is Protestant in spirit, he returns to Christ, and is so interested in making him a companionable and energetic Son of Man (read Brother Rotarian) that he must despoil him of all the attributes of the Godhead.

GILBERT SELDES.

* The Man Nobody Knows. A Discovery of Jesus. By Bruce Barton. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 220 pages. $2.50.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Democracy or Anarchy

SIR: It would be difficult to conceive any theory of governmental organization more democratic than that outlined by President Coolidge in his Memorial Day Address. He laid emphasis upon the right of local communities and local political units to govern themselves. He coupled the principle of local authority with the equally valid principle of local responsibility, and multitudes of American citizens who believe in orderly progress in society will be grateful to him.

Curiously enough, the extreme defenders of the principle of "states' rights" find in the President's address an attack on their political god. Governor Ritchie of Maryland assails the President's theory and says it will destroy local self-government altogether. Governor Ritchie says "Each state has a right to settle its own affairs in the way it thinks best regardless of what any one else thinks best for it. That is the whole theory of local self-government applied to the states."

The New York World picks out for condemnation from the President's address the following sentence: "If questions which the states will not fairly settle on their own account shall have to be settled for them by the federal government, it will only be because some states will have refused to discharge obvious duties." This, to the mind of the World, is high treason against state autonomy. It continues, "If there is to be vitality in local self-government, it is necessary to accept, as the President refuses to accept, the consequence. It is necessary to say that localities shall govern themselves in matters that concern them, even though they don't act as we should like them to act. It is necessary to say that they shall govern themselves in their own way, badly or well, wisely or unwisely."

Here is a clear-cut issue. The President urges on the one hand that local self-government shall be charged with the largest possible amount of authority and that the people within that political unit shall recognize the responsibility that accompanies authority. But he has political sense enough to recognize that there are times when localities either refuse to exercise authority or to assume social responsibility.

In such an exigency, what is to be done? The President says frankly—Appeal to a larger unit and let the nation safeguard its own interests even at the expense of a negligent or misguided local autonomy. Governor Ritchie and the New York World say—No, local self-government is the one sacred principle. Whatever its results, we must stand the consequences. We must accept the principle that "they shall govern themselves in their own way, badly or well, wisely or unwisely."

The President believes in a nation united by common interests, common ideals and a common destiny. The extreme advocates of "states' rights" believe in local self-government regardless of consequences. Do they believe that a state line is a sacred division, paramount to all other lines? Evidently. The state is sovereign. The nation is too big to govern wisely. It is too remote, too irresponsible. Then they are forced by logic to the conclusion that the smaller the local political unit, the more completely can the principle of governing itself in its own way, "badly or well, wisely or unwisely," be realized.

All right! The smallest political unit is the individual. Any effort on the part of the nation, state, county, city or township to control him is an invasion of his sacred rights. Local health laws, compulsory school attendance laws, speed laws and all rules of the road, represent a tyrannous invasion of his personal "states' rights"; because, as Governor Ritchie argues, this smallest political unit "has the right to settle its own affairs in the way it thinks best regardless of what any one else thinks best for it. That is the whole theory of local self-government applied to the states."

It is fortunate to have this whole doctrine of "states' rights" dragged out into the open where the American people can look it over and decide for themselves whether they prefer an organized and orderly democracy represented by President Coolidge, or individual self-government which owes no allegiance to any power beyond itself.

OWEN R. LOVEJOY,
General Secretary, National Child Labor Committee.

New York, N. Y

The New States' Righters

SIR: Mr. Coolidge in his Memorial Day address occupies a strange position. As head of the ruling party—the descendant of Federalism—he is urging the doctrines of Jefferson, and in rather extreme form. Why has the Republican party thus reversed itself on the historic issue of central against local authority?

Down until recent times, the cost of expansion was paid, through the tariff, by the consuming public, and did not bear harshly on people who were well-to-do. According to the Republican view, the tariff had to be maintained and the resulting revenue spent—so that national expenditure was synonymous with, rather than hostile to, the prosperity of the protected interests.

During the years of large surpluses, the government became expanded—and in a way not making sudden contraction possible. Consequently, whenever the Democrats came into power, they had to do one of two things—either abandon their low tariff policy and finance the expanded government by a Republican tariff, or find new sources of revenue. They chose the latter, and achieved their triumph in the federal income tax.

Then came the War, leaving its debt on the nation's resources. As a result, the tariff no longer provides for the government's expenses. Its revenues are eaten by the public debt, and therefore the current operations of the government demand the use of the income tax. With the surplus gone, the expansion of the government is no longer the inevitable consequence of a policy beneficial to the protected interests. It is instead a drain on their resources. As long as expansion was paid for through the tariff, the Republican leaders acknowledged its wisdom; now that it is paid for out of their own pockets, they begin to see the merit of Jefferson's philosophy of individualism and self-government.

CURTIS NETTELS.

Madison, Wis.

Back to the Constitution

SIR: In all the discussion that rages about the now famous Tennessee "anti-evolution law" no one has raised the real legal question involved, that question being the constitutionality of the law according to the Tennessee Constitution. That document is interesting and in some respects unique. The following quotation from Section 12 of Article XI might be worthy of comment:

> Knowledge, learning and virtue, being essential to the preservation of republican institutions and the diffusion of the opportunities and advantages of education throughout the different portions of the state, being highly conducive to the promotion of this end, *It shall be the duty of the General Assembly in all future periods of this Government, to cherish literature and science.*

The legislature in its zeal to exploit its own peculiar cosmogony and to promote its own political fortunes has signally disregarded its duty "to cherish literature and science." Let us go back to the Constitution!

LUCY R. SOMERVILLE.

Cleveland, Miss.

Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc

SIR: The New York Times of May 26 carries a story with this lead:

> Roberta Wagner, 13 years old, of 1739 West Eleventh Street, Brooklyn, who was expected by five doctors to die last March, prayed to Sainte Theresa to get well, and yesterday she sat up and began to plan for a vacation in the country.

The following paragraphs tell of the child's illness following an operation for appendicitis, of her novena to the saint, and conclude with her physician's comment beginning "It's a miracle."

From this we should judge the new saint had caught on very quickly, not only to the duties and privileges of her saintly office, but to the most approved methods of the "public relations counsel," both in the style and logic of the write-up and in its successful publication.

P. G. PERRIN.

Middlebury, Vt.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Brigham Young

Brigham Young, by M. R. Werner. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 462 pages. $5.

THERE is hardly any American subject more extraordinary than that of the Mormons, and with this fascinating material at hand, Mr. Werner could not help writing a fascinating book. The Mormons turn out to have been even stranger than, in ignorance, one had expected, but Mr. Werner's performance as organizer of this curious page of history is a little disappointing. He is good-humored, sympathetic, tolerant to be sure, as too few of the chroniclers of Mormonism seem to have been before him; he is fair and painstaking, he comes back from long research into dark places with armfuls of rich fodder for the mind, but this harvest has not been quite thoroughly enough chewed; too often his ironic comment is merely a means of connecting one long quotation with another; too often these shafts of irony are found sunk in the easiest of marks (for the Mormons are hopelessly open to ridicule); most of our psychological curiosities remain unsatisfied, and he seems to follow his subject rather than to lead it. But one forgets this as one passes through the strange gallery of holy, violent men, clinging to their prophet and their empty childish religion with a valiant fanaticism which is almost superhuman.

Nine people out of ten, when they hear the word "Mormon," will think of polygamy. Polygamy was the most obvious feature of Mormonism, and naturally the one most advertised by Gentiles. Actually it was not its most remarkable or important trait, and came into existence accidentally through the peculiarities of the prophet and founder, Joseph Smith, Jr. The story of Brigham Young, but for whom Mormonism would probably never have flourished, is inseparable from that of Joseph Smith, but for whose hallucinations, megalomania and self-deceit it would certainly never have been born, and anyone who tells the story of Mormonism must tell the story of both its great men. Mr. Werner digs deep into the history of Joseph Smith, Jr., who, while Brigham Young was, on a small scale, a great man, a considerable statesman, a faithful shepherd, a shrewd organizer, a valiant pioneer, remained, on a grand scale, a shoddy, vigorous, attractive, crazy faker. Smith grew up in the middle of a time and a place seething with omnivorous religious restlessness. It was a period of revivals, of hysterical intemperate search for salvation, when preachers of strange creeds went shouting, sobbing, cursing from one small community to another, when people changed their religions every week, and a new belief was born every day. Before religion began to occupy him, while he was still a rather disreputable younger member of a poor family, he and his father used to dig for gold or silver with a "peep-stone." He never found any gold, but the treasure hunt evidently gave him the idea which resulted in the Mormon religion. An angel of the Lord appeared to him, and revealed (one never makes out how much of this, or indeed any act of Joseph Smith's, was hallucination, and how much deception) the presence of golden plates hidden in a hillside. On these plates was inscribed, in "reformed Egyptian" characters, the book of special revelation which Smith with the help of several disciples "translated" and published as the Book of Mormon. After 116 pages had been translated, Smith gave them to a friend, by whom they were lost. This did not bother the Lord, who, in Harmony, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania, gave Smith a special revelation in which he commanded Smith to go ahead beginning with page 117 and not worry about the 116 which had been lost.

Revelation was Smith's technique. It seldom failed him, and he never lacked believers for whatever messages the Lord sent him. When the question arose how to pay for the printing of the Book of Mormon, Martin Harris, a well-to-do convert, received through Smith a revelation from God ordering him to "Pay the debt thou hast contracted with the printer. Release thyself from bondage." And Martin Harris believed, and pledged $3,000. Revelation, of course, was also the source of the doctrine of plural marriage. Joseph Smith was "intensely interested in women." He is reported as saying: "Whenever I see a pretty woman I have to pray for grace." Evidently he did not pray often or hard enough, and he soon found that something had to be done to cool his wife's anger at his many affairs. He had been practicing polygamy, says Mr. Werner, and he had to justify it to Emma Smith. Result, a message from the Lord: "And I command mine handmaid, Emma Smith, to abide and cleave unto my servant Joseph, and to none else. . . . And let mine handmaid forgive my servant Joseph his trespasses." From this specific command God (for God read Joseph Smith throughout) went on to a general approval and advocacy of polygamy: "And if (a man) have ten virgins given him by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him, and they are given unto him, therefore is he justified."

Mankind has believed so many things fantastic and incredible that one does not feel like accusing Mormons of more than childish credulity toward their Prophet and his Book. Polygamy was an accident, and many Mormons were loath to accept it. But how could they have believed in the divine origin of the Book of Mormon? According to Mr. Werner, it is "one of the dullest books in world literature." It "contains no new theological ideas; and very few at all which it has not taken from the Bible." Its profusion of Biblical phrase, paraphrase, downright plagiarism and palpable anachronism ought to have seemed a fraud to any ordinarily sensible person. But it did not seem so, though many of the Mormons were in their way uncommonly shrewd. Neither can there be discovered in it any creed or conviction, any mystic faith or spiritual flame likely to rally masses of people to its standard. The Book tells the story of a lost and imaginary holy tribe, the Nephites, who came to America and were wiped out by the wicked Lamanites. "It was the duty of Joseph Smith, Jr., to redeem the continent for the righteous Nephites." The name Mormon (he was the last of the Nephites), according to Smith, means More Good, from mor, an English contraction, and "the Egyptian mon, meaning good." And that is about all there is to it. The seed was here of a doctrine of exclusiveness, which was probably the chief appeal to the seekers after salvation and religion. All who embraced this faith were chosen, righteous, beloved of the Lord, all others were Gentile, and therefore their enemies and God's also. Readers of the Old Testament will remember that this is not the first instance of the kind in history. Indeed the Mormons were Old Testament people in many ways. In them the savage lonely fanaticism of Israel, its god of vengeance, its gigantic division of mankind into chosen and damned, its law and hierarchy, its hysterical dogma, its iron inexorable faith, its persecution, tribulation, cruelty and despotism, lived again briefly. These elements have faded

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

away with time, and today the Mormons are much as other men, only somewhat more prosperous. But for half a century the archaic flame, bereft of all mystical refinements, burned high.

It would probably never have burned so long had it not been for the martyrdom of Joseph Smith, which, together with other persecutions, welded the Mormons into a lonely band prepared for any suffering, and made possible the heroic pilgrimage to Utah. If the Mormons, driven savagely from Missouri, had stayed at Nauvoo, if they had not been persecuted there, if Smith had not been murdered, if the sentiment of their neighbors had not been such that there was danger of the heads of Smith and the other victims being cut off and placed on exhibition, Mormonism might have disintegrated. Smith, though a Prophet, was not the man to keep a flock together. There would have been revolts at an authority which promised, if a man was not satisfied, to "kick his backside." Smith remained rather disreputable, a leader who got drunk, as he said, "to show the elders how bad it looked," who gave himself the title and the gaudy uniform of Lieutenant General over the Nauvoo Legion, who aspired to be President of the United States, who kept on receiving revelations from a God so specific as to direct the dimensions of the Temple to be "fifty-five by sixty-five feet" and the election of Joseph P. Hoge to Congress, who would record in his journal: "I wrestled with William Wall, the most expert wrestler in Ramus, and threw him. In the afternoon, held a church meeting"; and who toasted his enemies as follows:

> Here is wishing that all the mobocrats of the nineteenth century were in the middle of the sea, in a stone canoe, with an iron paddle; that a shark might swallow the canoe, and the shark be thrust into the nethermost part of hell, and the door locked, the key lost, and a blind man hunting for it.

Fortunately for the Mormons, he was killed, and the great Exodus into the desert began, away from surroundings which would sooner or later have swallowed the people up or killed them off. Brigham Young was the perfect leader. A man of great practical sense, he was completely without Smith's erratic childishness. Neither was he burdened with revelation, or indeed any theology at all.

> I know that Joseph Smith is a Prophet of God, that this is the Gospel of Salvation, and if you do not believe it you will be damned, every one of you. This is one of the most important sermons ever preached.

His creed did not go much further than this, and the bulk of his time was occupied with eminently practical considerations, and with the most complete and outspoken advice any religious people ever received from their leader. Brigham Young was a solid block of shrewd vitality. To him, God was always a being of "body, parts, and passions." What little religion he ever felt was far from mournful. This trait he inherited, for his father, according to a contemporary, "was one of the liveliest and most cheerful men I ever saw. . . . He would sit and talk with us, and sing and pray and jump, and do anything that was good to make us lively and happy." In his early years Brigham Young was a jack-of-all-trades, and from painting and building houses, tilling the soil himself, grew into a consummate engineer, organizer and practical economist. One wonders how so vigorously canny a Yankee could have embraced Mormonism. Perhaps it was because he needed a new religion, and here was one which offered play to his combination of supreme independence, despotic, self-confident mastery over others, with one hundred percent faith in and obedience to supernatural authority however vague or crude. In his hands the faith, while remaining crude, became far from vague; in his hands it became the motive power for a vast scheme of duties, commandments and accomplishments which his will and personality forced on the flock.

Perhaps there were other leaders who could have led the Mormons into Utah out of the House of Bondage. But it is doubtful, and the tragi-comic pilgrimage of the Mormons, their settlement, increase and ultimate consolidation rest finally with him. The Biblical vastness of their enterprise, their Old Testament courage and steadfastness in solitude and ill fortune, their Old Testament hatreds and invincible pride, are embodied in him. If he had not had them to lead and drive and chastise and counsel, he would have found other people elsewhere to listen to his homely, iron, humorous words, and obey him. If he had not been fulminating from Utah, he would have found another sphere in which to assail Gentile governments, and some other reason why President Polk "is now weltering in hell with old Zachary Taylor, where the present administrators will soon be if they do not repent."

What a patchwork of the heroic, the ludicrous, the perversely romantic is the story of the Mormons! Tarred and feathered, mobbed in Missouri, murdered in Illinois, waggoning slowly across the great plains, dancing by campfires on their way, and also to be discovered by people in Iowa, "at the top of every hill, before they disappeared, looking back, like banished Moors, on their abandoned homes and the far seen temple and its glittering spire." Missionaries by hundreds in England, streams of converts from Denmark, Sweden, Russia, forlorn parcels of destitute humanity, foreigners many of them, dragging their goods and women in carts by hand from the Mississippi to Salt Lake. The desert made to flower by painful irrigation, a great city planted, sweated into being in sand under the sun, a haphazard laborious colony grown tenfold in as many years, resisting the lure of California gold, threatened with a United States army occupation, leaving the city, bitterly resolved to burn it and move on again, cursing the government and all other unfriendly men, being jailed for polygamy, stubbornly opposing, shouting, cursing, excommunicating, murdering, baptizing, attending the best theatre west of the Mississippi, building, working, accumulating, and marrying and marrying and marrying again.

The Mormons, though they were in serious danger as disloyal to the United States—the Bolsheviki of their day, might in their isolation have prevailed against outside interference. But their isolation, with the coming of the railroad and other colonists about them, was broken down, and they outraged the rest of America at its most sensitive point, sexual ethics. The fury of the righteous monogamists after a long struggle, after long secret resistance, eventually broke up the most characteristic, notorious but most accidental of their institutions. After being observed sub rosa in the East, the doctrine of plural marriage was finally proclaimed. It is doubtful whether anyone would have thought of it but for Smith. From having been the justification of his own sensuality, polygamy became the solemn duty of every good Mormon. Men married wives who did not want them, out of piety. Others of course were not displeased by the doctrine. But emphasis was laid on the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sacredness of polygamy, and all accusations of carnal indulgence were vehemently, and usually sincerely, denied. Looking back at the Mormon's complete acceptance of the doctrine, and perfect freedom from sense of sin, it is not hard to imagine a world in which, by some trick of history, the polygamists were the majority, and the Mormons, by virtue of some change in the mechanism of Joseph Smith, were the fanatic, persecuted, monogamistic few. And pioneer colonization of new country made polygamy possible and desirable in Utah, just as the economic conditions of today would make it impossible nearly everywhere.

It is easy to see how the polygamy of the Mormons seemed wicked or ludicrous to their contemporaries. It is a curious society indeed in which it is possible for a man to predict, as Heber Kimball predicted, "one hundred years won't pass away before my posterity will outnumber the present inhabitants of the State of New York"; a society in which a confirmed bachelor, suddenly converted to the principle, should take his first two wives on the same day; in which a father can record, as Brigham Young, Jr., recorded, "Met some of my sons on street. Had lunch with them. They are good boys, but don't work at religion much"; or in which large dances were a vital part of social life because there a man could meet and talk to all of his wives, and, if he was as conscientious as Brigham Young, dance once with every one.

Brigham Young's own family used to be—and still is, to judge from laughter at his name in movie audiences—the nation's joke. But actually it was a very respectable and sober beehive. Of wives he had twenty-seven, and of children by these wives, fifty-five. He ruled them as a despotic patriarch, and only after many years elevated one, Amelia Folsom, to the quasi-dignity of a favorite. He built her a separate house, and when he went to the theatre she occupied the seat of honor in his box, while all the other wives occupied "the special row of chairs reserved for them in the parquet." Occasionally Brigham Young found someone he could not persuade to marry him. In the case of Julia Deane Hayne, an actress, he was much disappointed, and "had her portrait painted on his sleigh." Julia, one imagines, would have brought some needed spark into the home, for the faces of the twenty wives whose photographs Mr. Werner has selected have all the sombre sterling matronly lack of charm of any contemporary collection of New England ladies of the same age.

Over this busy, cooking, weaving, sewing, saving, childbearing harem, over his people as individuals, over the congregation in the Temple, Brigham Young ruled like a Yankee Moses, and talked like a Dutch Uncle. He was outspoken, even for those days of calling a spade a damned shovel, and his sermons are sprinkled with sulphur and fury and tough, vertebrate, ringing imprecations. In the pulpit, he said: "I do all my swearing."

But they all talked as freely in those days. Brigham Young's words have a frank explosive terseness all their own, but others shared his gift for homely idiomatic thunder, a noise infinitely far removed from the sweet stuff fed to us by the men of God today. Those ancients—they really do belong in the Palestine of 4,000 years ago—were crazy, by our lights, but with all their bigoted dynamite, their cosmic intolerance, their million horse-power of self esteem, there was health in them, and the wrath and hunger beloved of the Lord of Battles, which we today would call guts.

Their scorched old bones now lie beneath a meeker soil, which feeds more temperate children, who, while they would not shoot up all creation for Jehovah, wouldn't be likely to do much of anything for him. Those wonderful Old Testament men burnt their lives in the service of the Lord, and had vitality enough beside to heap up wealth and order, on which their diluted posterity now prosper. Mormonism is in the dust, and the dust is gold and of their own raising.

ROBERT LITTELL.

No Spirit at All

The Newer Spirit, by V. F. Calverton. New York: Boni and Liveright. 284 pages. $2.50.

MR. V. F. CALVERTON has recently produced a volume entitled The Newer Spirit and purporting to be "a sociological criticism of literature." The book has been beautifully manufactured (Boni and Liveright); Ernest Boyd contributes an appreciative foreword, and the jacket retails praise from several impressive sources. The text has less to recommend it.

Mr. Calverton divides literature into three great epochs: the feudal or aristocratic, the bourgeois, the proletarian. Each, he states, has its own æsthetic. In the first the heroes are kings or nobles; in the second they are merchants or bankers; in the third they are toilers. Since the class of characters and the social field of action are to Mr. Calverton the whole essence of æsthetic work, he draws his indefeasible conclusion that the one governing factor in the genesis of art is the social-economic. Follows, a study in "sociological criticism" of Sherwood Anderson. Mr. Anderson is a proletarian artist: his æsthetic is proletarian. This is clear from the fact that many of his characters are workers, and that he seems to believe in a social revolution. It is clear also from the fact that he never could have written Othello, in which the protagonists are gentlemen and ladies. The third essay is entitled The Impermanency of Æsthetic Values. It shatters once for all the fond belief that there is anything to be studied in a work of art save the shifting of personal taste.

"A work of art," says Mr. Calverton, "does not possess a positive or absolute value. . . . The same object can have different effects at different times; a book, for example, entitled Mr. M. can have an effect B upon Miss Farna if read in a period of ecstasy, and the effect D if read in a period of despondency. . . . The same bullet going at the same velocity will have a different effect upon a stone wall than upon a sandhill. . . . " In this inspired analogue the bullet is the work of art, the sandhill and the stone wall are sociological conditions. The conclusion is that art can be considered only in the light of sociology as the æsthetic norm and sole efficient cause. Mr. Calverton has proven even more: to wit, that since a bullet has different effects on sand and stone, we can study sand and stone, but under no circumstance the nature and velocity of bullets.

The next contribution of The Newer Spirit is to the theory of relativity. In the doubtless bourgeois mind of Einstein, relativity at last becomes the subject of fixed laws correlating phenomena as observed from variously moving bodies of reference. In the proletarian mind of Mr. Calverton, relativity applied to art relieves us of the need to examine art itself. Since a given novel strikes a man with a toothache in one way, and a man who has

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dined well in another, it is plain that what alone counts in a consideration of literature is the ache and the dinner.

Now comes the chapter on Proletarian Art. This, of course, is the exclusive outcome of the proletarian movement that arose in the last century out of capitalism and the industrial revolution. It has its new æsthetic. "In literature, the workingman as distinguished from the noble becomes the hero." "Condemnation is turned to pity and punishment to treatment." "The attitude toward sex becomes unfettered of bourgeois prejudice." From these traits of modern proletarian art we learn that we have been mistaken about the dates of The Dialogues of Buddha, The New Testament, The Talmud, Petronius and Rabelais. They were all written after A. D. 1848.

One is tempted to go on tasting the treasures of this book. From a chapter entitled The Great Man Illusion we learn for instance, that since most great men sprang from moneyed classes, economic conditions are the sole efficient cause of genius. Some day Mr. Calverton should have a disciple in the same relation to himself that he bears to Taine or to Plekhanov. We shall then be informed that since there has never been a great sculptor not born of woman, woman is the efficient cause of all great sculpture: nay, more! since there has never been a mathematician who did not regularly indulge in breakfast, bacon and eggs are the true cause of Euclid. We doubt, however, if any disciple of Mr. Calverton can go farther than our author in his chapter, Art, Science and the Quantitative Conception, where, with true Pythagorean insight, it is revealed that to say "red" is sentimental and bourgeois, but to say "range of wave-lengths between 7,600 Angstroms and 6,400 Angstroms" is truthful and proletarian.

Mr. Calverton has written an unanswerable book. There is a field for sociological criticism of the arts: but a man who places the Goncourt brothers and Hardy among proletarian artists because they wrote a tale about a servant girl (why not George Moore, too?) and who blandly sets aside vast realms of folk-creation from the Jataka and the Bible onward because they would upset his economic theory, can scarcely be said to have entered it. There is a case for the relativity of æsthetic values: but a man who believes he is discussing shifts in art when he is merely recounting shifts in the wardrobe of art, is not equipped to make it. Indeed a critic who builds his thesis exclusively on borrowed terms of nineteenth century Europe, like *bourgeois, anti-bourgeois, proletarian* without suspecting that they mean nothing in America until they have been defined; who dares to ignore the influences of Emerson and the Bible on Whitman in order to measure Whitman wholly by his sociological inch-rule; who places Donne with the Puritans because he had a conscience; who after pages of arrogant palaver to prove the non-existence of absolute æsthetic values sets down dogmatically seven points which "a story must possess to be significant," can scarcely be said to deserve answer at all. Nor would he have one, from this writer, save for a highly interesting fact.

Mr. Calverton is taken seriously in radical labor circles. He was a contributor to the defunct New Leader. James O'Neal, author of The Workers in American History, hails his book as a "permanent contribution." And Michael Gold, former editor of The Liberator, confesses himself a disciple.

This is all interesting and important because it brings vividly to light the intellectual and spiritual bankruptcy of our revolutionary labor movement. Quite literally it is without ideas beyond the mechanics of action, and without ideals beyond the aim of success. It is alien to a man like Trotsky who once said, "The artists are not here for the revolution; the revolution is here for the artists." Scratch the surface of a Gompers and a Judge Gary and you will find one cultural spirit. Under the skin, our radicals have no concepts and no values beyond the materialism of their foes. Mr. Calverton is an instance of this. His philosophy is a feeble echo of the positivism of Comte and Taine and of the neo-Hegelian determinism of Marx and Plekhanov. Even his stress of class distinction as a property of art and his harping on subject-matter are "capitalistic and bourgeois" traits. Prior to the emergence of the Middle Class, æsthetic values were held free of such extraneous considerations. The artist took his theme and his figures where they were handy, and devoted himself to essential matters: their manipulation into forms and patterns expressive of his spirit. But the burgher, proudly conscious of himself, desired to be portrayed. And the burgher, ignorant of the traditions of art, invented fresh values close to his own traditions: such as importance of subject (since he could not understand design) and originality of theme (since he *could* understand the claims of property). Hence the one childish idea which Mr. Calverton has gleaned from his reading of Taine (who would turn in his grave if he could see this book) is an exact production of what Mr. Calverton himself would call "bourgeois æsthetics."

Some years ago, the lamented John Reed had a memorable talk with William Jennings Bryan. "What is your favorite work of art?" asked Jack. "Any Madonna!" beamed Mr. Bryan. His æsthetic principle and that of Mr. Calverton are one.

There is this difference, chiefly. Beneath the Commoner's artistic nescience is revealed a sweet and healthy reverence for sacred values. Beneath Mr. Calverton's preference for works of art "exalting the working-man" is hidden an undifferentiated love of power.

Until some intelligent and creative ideal distinguishes this power urge of the laborer from that of his boss, what is truly revolutionary in America will remain divorced from the so-called "revolutionary movement."

WALDO FRANK.

Around the Mulberry Bush

The Mulberry Bush, by Sylvia Lynd. New York: Minton, Balch and Company. 278 pages. $2.50.

Young Mrs. Cruse, by Viola Meynell. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 272 pages. $2.

Love, by Elizabeth. New York: Doubleday, Page and Company. 396 pages. $2.

He was a Man, by Rose Wilder Lane. New York: Harper and Brothers. 380 pages. $2.50.

SYLVIA LYND is master of a subtle kind of story, tenuous and full of inexpressible implications, which one likes, perhaps, to think of as peculiarly English, until one recalls that Mr. Conrad Aiken and Mrs. Evelyn Scott have both worked within the same frame and used a similar palette. Mrs. Lynd takes life at one laconic moment—two set old bachelors entertaining an unacclimated guest, or a young wife shopping for her lord and obvious master—and from this almost accidental centre she weaves a web which encloses the history of a lifetime, the rise and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

encrustation of a social class, or what not. It is a familiar England that one glimpses in these tales: one sees it in the better sort of Punch cartoon: but Mrs. Lynd gives it to us in all its pathos and absurdity. "Mr. Ambrose Tillotson loved man and bird and beast. By man he did not mean, of course, motorists, or Lord Rothermere, or naturally, fashionable women . . . Once when he took his great-nieces to the Zoo he was overheard to remark that it would be a good thing if the animals (these glorious beasts) would burst out of their cages and attack the crowds ('rend stinking humanity')." Pathos, humor, satire, wistful yearning: in fact, all around the Mulberry Bush. An excellent collection. One hesitates to hail Mrs. Lynd as Miss Mansfield's equal; but that is because these stories belong to a different botanic order and grow out of a different soil, nearer Dickens than Chekhov.

In Young Mrs. Cruse we are still in an atmosphere of mists and mellow fruitfulness; but Miss Meynell's delicacy of perception is carried to such an extent, as in the title story, that the point itself sometimes is almost lost behind film upon film of nuance. Pastoral, one of the longer tales in this collection of seven, pictures the envelopment of a cultivated woman, who has left her heart with an earlier lover, by a humbler and greater soul, attached to the soil, and binding her slowly to the things that possess him, until she too is caught, and finds herself unable to heed what had once been a trumpet call from the outside. Pastoral and La Figlia are both resonant with passion; they have something of Mr. Lawrence's intensity; albeit they derive their fire from a less primitive volcano. In Miss Meynell's stories there is an echo of the quiet tragic beauty one finds in the old Scots ballads—and what shall one say of a country that produces a Meredith and a Hardy, an Aldous Huxley and a Viola Meynell in the same generation?

To turn from these writers to "Elizabeth" is a sharp wrench indeed. In the German Garden and in the Pastor's Wife was a quality that compelled respect; but in Love one is confronted by an inferior novelist, not indeed entirely bereft of her sense of the rich grotesques of character, but hampered by the self-imposed obstacles in her plot, and dealing sentimentally with the relation of a young man who courts and marries a much older woman. All the possibilities of the story are prettified and vulgarized; its harsh sincerity is forfeited through the fact that the author adopts the point of view that might be her heroine's or her heroine's daughter's. Love is, one hears, a week-end topic of conversation in England; but that is perhaps because people of taste are interested in the theme, while those who do not possess any are too easily satisfied by the way in which the theme is presented.

It is hard to be fair to Rose Wilder Lane's He was a Man. The Gordon Blake of her story, it is an open secret, is Jack London; and her novel labors under the handicap of having been in large part forestalled by London's own John Barleycorn and by Charmian London's Life. Those who are not acquainted with either of these volumes will find that Miss Lane has done a pretty good job in its own right; she has written about his life and adventures with at times an almost masculine veracity; but she suffers, as Mrs. London suffered, as Jack London suffered, from the difficulty of attempting to justify what was after all a disagreeable character—a ranger, a bully, a muddlehead, and on the evidence of all his friends and admirers a good deal of a cad. The more London's friends attempt to carve their god in stone, the more obvious it becomes that not merely the feet, but a great part of the rest of his body, particularly the head and heart, were clay. Ironically, in the very act of piety and praise the truth comes out!

LEWIS MUMFORD.

Letters on the American Revolution, 1774-1776, *edited by Margaret W. Willard. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company. 370 pages. $7.50.*

THIS volume is made up of contemporary letters from British soldiers in America and from American colonists of all shades of opinion and of all social grades. The whole mass of correspondence is from printed sources, but, with a few exceptions, the letters are to be found only in the files of British newspapers inaccessible to most American students. Most of the writers never expected their letters, written to family or friends in the old country, to appear in print, and the names of the senders and recipients were usually suppressed for obvious reasons, so that their value is somewhat lessened for the historian. They contain little or no new information but in spite of, or because of, all the gossip, rumors, exaggerations and false reports which are found in them, they afford a somewhat vivid picture of the state of mind of the times, and afford "a background of fact and opinion." This in itself is of value, but the chief contribution of the volume lies in providing us with a very large proportion of the material which was considered as first hand, authentic evidence in England of the American situation, and which was thus of importance in molding public opinion there. As the editor points out, the fact that so large a body of argument opposed to the policy of the home government appeared in the newspapers indicates that a large section of newspaper readers, if not sympathetic with the American cause, was at least interested in opposing the course of the ministry. The book should be read rather for the light it sheds on English opinion than on American facts.

JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS.

Contributors

MARJORIE MEEKER has for the past few years published verse and short stories in various magazines. She was given the 1924 Young Poet's Prize awarded annually by Poetry. Mitchell Kennerly will soon publish her first book of poems.

NORMAN ANGELL is the author of The Great Illusion and other books on international relations. He was general manager of the Paris Daily Mail from 1905 to 1914, and is now doing newspaper work in England and France.

GEORGE O'NEIL is one of the editors of The Measure.

VIRGINIA WOOLF is the author of The Voyage Out, Jacob's Room, Mrs. Dalloway, and The Common Reader (these last two lately published by Harcourt Brace & Company.)

BABETTE DEUTSCH is the author of a volume of poems, Banners, and with her husband, Avrahm Yarmolinsky, is the translator of Modern Russian Poetry, An Anthology. Her new book of poems, Honey Out of the Rock, will appear in the fall.

MAXWELL ANDERSON, co-author of What Price Glory? is on the staff of the New York World.

LEWIS MUMFORD is the author of The Story of Utopias, and Sticks and Stones: An Interpretation of American Architecture and Civilization.

JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS, LL.D., Litt. D., author of several books on New England history, is a contributor to the Atlantic Monthly and other journals.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED